



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

Church Street Gets Greener, Tastier, and Quieter (maybe)

By Erin O'Briant

Ten new trees will soon take root, four restaurants are preparing to open, and even the squeaky wheels on the J-Church will be getting some extra grease. The signs are all there: Upper Church Street is on the fast track.

Screeching to Halt

Church Street neighbors may soon get the good night's sleep they've been dreaming of—that is, if Muni officials live up to the promises they made at an Upper Noe Neighbors meeting the evening of Thursday, June 22.

Screeching Muni cars on the J-Church line have kept residents up at night—and during the day, too—for close to a decade. Marianne Hampton, who lives at 30th and Dolores streets, is still paying off the \$6,000 double-pane windows she installed in her home four years ago. The noise from the Muni cars screeching around curves in the Church Street tracks was so bad, she says the only other option was to move.

It isn't just the J-Church trains causing the noise. It seems the Church Street line is the fastest route back to the car barn for other Muni lines, including the N and F. "At 1:45 a.m., all the trains go past my house, and at 6:45 a.m. they come by again," says Hampton, who notes that the ongoing sleep loss hasn't helped her attitude toward Muni. "This has been so discouraging," she adds. "It's big government paid for by my taxes, thumbing their nose at us."

Many of her neighbors agree. "We are desperately fed up with sleep deprivation, being ignored, lied to, and not given the information we ask for," says Suzanne Radcliffe, who also lives near 30th and Dolores streets. "Homeowners in this neighborhood who rent out apartments have lost tenants over this situation."

Worst of all, the problem isn't all that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



When Common Scents opened on 24th Street in 1971, one of its first admirers was Six-Pack the cat (shown in this 1973 photo with staffer Toni Littlestone and store owner Helen Norris, right). Since then, the bath shop has attracted wave after wave of loyal customers.

LOCAL GEMS

Common Scents Smelling Sweet For 35 Years

By Kate Volkman

If you live in Noe Valley and enjoy taking bubble baths, there's a good chance your bubbles come from the 24th Street bath shop Common Scents.

Common Scents is a local treasure. It has such a rosy reputation, in fact, that the San Francisco Board of Supervisors recently honored the store for 35 years of "pampering Noe Valley with your wide assortment of quality creams, candles,

oils and soaps." The commendation was awarded at a May 19 party hosted by the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association.

So how did this business blossom?

Common Scents owners Helen Norris and Linda Ramey opened their shop, at 3920 24th Street near Sanchez, in the fall of 1971. But it might not have happened without a nudge from another small business owner.

"Helen and I were not good friends in particular. We [just] knew each other," recalls Ramey. "I ran into a mutual friend of ours one day. He said, 'Wouldn't it be great to open a body shop?' And I didn't even know what a body shop was. I was like, 'A body shop—like a car repair or someplace like that?'"

The friend, George DuBois, who worked as a sandal maker, explained that he meant a store that carried soaps, similar to The Body Shop, a hip new store in Berkeley.

"I was totally not interested," Ramey says. "I was a school librarian at the time. And then he ran into Helen and he did the same thing with her. So she called me and said, 'George says you're interested in opening a body shop.' And I said, 'Well, not exactly.' But she asked if I'd be interested in talking about it, so we did. And then everything fell into place."

The more they thought about it, the more they became convinced that opening an ecology-minded shop, where customers could refill their lotions and shampoos using the same containers, would be

Noe Shops Hand Over Their Summer Reading And Music Lists

By Lorraine Sanders

Itching for a good book to complement a lazy summer afternoon, a family trip to the beach, or just to make your twice-daily ride on the J a little more bearable?

You're in luck. We surveyed the knowledgeable folks at Noe Valley's bookstores to come up with titles to flesh out your summer reading list.

If books just aren't your bag, don't despair. The staff members at Streetlight Records gave us summer music recommendations that will keep your toes tapping all the way into the fall.

Adventures in Fiction

Bibliophiles have plenty of choices for good fiction this summer. Kerry McLaughlin of Phoenix Books suggests *Absurdistan*, the second novel from Gary Shteyngart, whose novel *The Russian Debutante's Handbook* became a best-seller when it debuted in 2003. His latest novel tells the darkly humorous tale of an obese Russian-American denied re-entry to the United States after leaving the country to attend his father's funeral in Russia. The protagonist's quest for a fake passport that will allow him to return home to New York leads him to Absurdistan, a post-Soviet country in love with the United States and all things Halliburton.

In *Persuasion Nation* by George Saunders is another of McLaughlin's summer reading picks. The short-story collection continues Saunders' fascination with life in our information-driven, media-obsessed world. In his satirical tales, orphans can easily end up as market research commodities, towns can become collective pet murderers, and advertising can change anything.

McLaughlin also recommends Haruki Murakami's *Kafka on the Shore*, now out in paperback. The story follows the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13



The squealing of metal against metal as the J-Church cars round 30th Street has tormented the neighbors for years. At a meeting in June, Muni officials promised to grease the tracks more regularly and reduce middle-of-the-night runs on the line.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Voice Takes 30 Days Off

This newspaper is on vacation until Aug. 1. (Don't worry, we do this every summer.) Please save your news, announcements, and calendar items until then. Thanks. You actually have until Aug. 15 to get stuff to us for the September issue, which is due on the streets of Noe Valley on Friday, Sept. 1. If you want to buy a display ad, you have until Aug. 18. Our address is 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114, or you can e-mail editor@noevalleyvoice.com.



132 of Nina's Closest Friends. The Noe Valley Co-op Nursery School families gathered in Douglass Park June 16 for their graduation class photo and to honor Director Nina Youkelson (top row, sixth from right), who has retired after running the school for 37 years.

Photo by Beverly Tharp



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NO. 1
MAY, 2006

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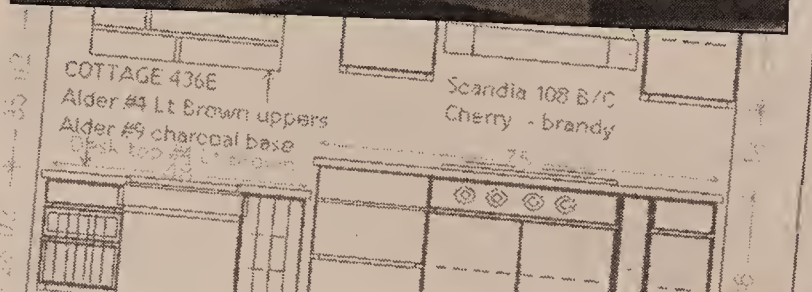
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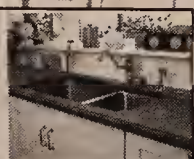
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LETTERS 39¢

Safeway Predates Little Bell on Castro

Editor:

Regarding the Noe Valley History Quiz in the Rumors section of the April and May issues: The column is great, and the quiz was fun. You were right that Little Bell Market preceded the Walgreen's store in the former cablecar barn on Castro Street near Jersey. But here's an interesting footnote: Before Little Bell landed on Castro, the building was occupied by Safeway.

Hard to believe now.

Take care, and keep up the good work.

Lynn Thompson

Via e-mail

Awash in Surf Super Memories

Editor:

On a whim I googled "Surf Super Market" and came up with your *Noe Valley Voice* quiz ["Rumors Behind the News," May 2006]. My grandparents, and later my parents and uncle, owned Surf for many years. It was at 4045 24th Street [where the Rite Aid is now], a couple of doors down from Hopwell's [now Le Zinc Bistro]. As kids, my sister and I were crazy about the Hopwell's dolls.

I am glad you also remember Surf. I think Reno the butcher bought the store from my parents. Then it became a Thrifty Jr. We were always competing for customers from the Big Bell and Little Bell, a losing battle for a mom and pop store. I recall the two Bell markets as being really close to each other.

One funny story was when coffee prices were skyrocketing and Surf Super was broken into. Burglars sawed through the roof, came in, and took only coffee

and cigarettes. One year my dad put us out on the sidewalk during the 24th Street Fair selling candied apples. We could keep all the profit, he said. We sold a lot of apples.

Kristina Perez Krow
Via e-mail

Nina Says Farewell

Dear Friends in Noe Valley:

It's hard for me to believe that 37 years have gone by since the day the Noe Valley Nursery School opened its doors for the first time on Jan. 15, 1969. The doors have been open ever since, and what a glorious and varied river of people have flowed through them!

Each day at the school was for me an unknown: six parents and 24 children creating a small world of talking and singing, arguing and dancing, learning and teaching. And more, of course.

It was not always easy, but it was always alive, changing, and beautiful—a place in which people opened up to each other, children and parents and me, the director of this astonishing place for all these years. (See photo, page 2.)

Well, the school will continue for another 37 years, I am sure, but without me. The school has hired a new director, Susan Edwards, a person of intelligence, sensitivity, and humor, whose son was a kid at the school 29 years ago. So she knows what an amazing place it is, and is ready to add to its richness.

And I am ready to say goodbye to all the many good friends in the Noe Valley community that for 37 years have been so supportive—especially the Noe Valley Ministry, our extraordinary landlord. Together, the Ministry and the school have changed and grown, always heading in the same direction—towards better understanding, a loving community, and a better world for all people.

Nina Youkelson
Director, Noe Valley Nursery School
1021 Sanchez Street

Editor's Note: The Noe Valley Voice has had a small office located next to the Noe Valley Co-op Nursery School within the Noe Valley Ministry for 29 years, and throughout that time, the school and Nina Youkelson, its wise, warm, and wonderful director, have been our neighbor. Nina, we're going to miss seeing your smiling face. Enjoy your retirement and come back to visit!

Garden Guardians

Editor:

Thank you for the wonderful article on the Noe Valley Garden Tour ["A Glimpse into Noe Valley's Secret Gardens," June 2006]. My garden was one of those featured.

I wanted to point out, however, that the article listed Jonica Brooks as the owner of the garden. I am only a renter of the space. The owner of the property is Theodore Scalione. He is the real hero keeping the garden space open!

Thank you for having such a wonderful newspaper. I read every edition.

Jonica Brooks
23rd Street

Creeping Magnolias

Editor:

Congratulations to the *Noe Valley Voice*—you are always great! Congratulations especially to the Friends of the Urban Forest ["The Seeds of a Neighborhood Tree Planting," March 2006]. The article about them was so interesting, particularly the line "Magnolias and olive trees are two of the many species that have thrived here in the past."

Artist and Editor Heads East, Jumps To Last Page



Chicago Needed Her. This seemingly cheerful Cubs fan insisted on spending her Fourth of July holiday in a city known to be windier than San Francisco. And rumor has it she's even going there to stay. For the illustrated story by and about *Voice* staffer Karol Barske, see page 56. Photo by Jack Tipple

What a lovely gesture of friendship to the state of Mississippi. Yes, magnolias are the state tree and flower of Mississippi. Perhaps we can name San Francisco Mississippi West? Or have a cultural exchange? Friends of the Urban Forest could visit and get some ideas on what to plant in San Francisco. Just be sure not to plant anything native to California. Not exotic enough, of course.

Name withheld by request
24th Street

Any Lunnys Out There?

Editor:

I stumbled onto your article about turning the Lunny House into a retail/condominium complex ["City Approves 'Lunny House' Development," September 2003]. All Lunnys, the surname for an old Irish clan, are related if you go back far enough. I had never heard of a Robert Lunny living in Noe Valley. For that matter, I had never heard of Noe Valley.

Are there any Lunnys still living in your neck of the woods?

There are a fair number of Lunnys in Florida (all Catholic) and in South Carolina and North Carolina (all Baptist—my South Carolina uncle "converted"). We've heard of a few Lunnys in New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. But California is a new branch of the family. Interestingly, the main restaurant in the Cosmos Hotel in Moscow is called Lunny—so a few Lunnys have traveled afar.

I'd love to hear from the Noe Lunnys. My e-mail is fishngrits@bellsouth.net.

Don Lunny
Jacksonville, Fla.



LETTERS to the EDITOR

THE VOICE welcomes your letters to the editor. Write the *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Or e-mail editor@noevalleyvoice.com. Please include your name, address, and phone number. (Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication.) Be aware that letters may be edited for brevity or clarity. We look forward to hearing from you.

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Church Street on The Upswing

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

hard to mitigate. With twice-daily track greasing, drivers can trundle down the tracks without too much noise. Trouble is, some drivers don't take the turns as slowly as they should. And neighbors say Muni doesn't grease the tracks twice a day, as it has agreed to do—or pressure drivers to slow down—unless the residents keep complaining. “I’ve been disappointed that Muni’s backsliding on maintenance has brought back the screeching,” admits District 8 Supervisor Bevan Dufty.

That’s okay. The members of Upper Noe Neighbors will continue to prod them. “I can hear [the squealing], and I live four blocks away,” notes UNN President Vicki Rosen. “We aren’t letting go of this. This is a no-brainer.”

20 Cars to Take Another Route

Wilson Johnson, Muni’s deputy general manager for transportation; two other Muni officials; a staff member from Supervisor Dufty’s office; and a representative from the San Francisco Controller’s Office all attended the June Upper Noe Neighbors meeting. According to Rosen, Muni officials again agreed to grease the tracks twice a day during the week and once a day on weekends and holidays. They also stated that starting Aug. 26 a satellite barn at King and Sixth streets would be able to accommodate 20 more cars, taking them off the J-Church rails.

In the long term, other possible solutions include changing the tracks or using a different kind of train.

“They’re going to be replacing some tracks and increasing the radius of the part of the track that makes its turn onto San Jose Avenue [at 30th Street],” Rosen explains. “They can’t do it at 30th and Church because the streets are too narrow, so that a long-term solution will not be available for that corner.”

Dufty says he is “aggressively pursuing” the completion of a new car barn on Third Street in 2008, so perhaps in a couple of years only J-Church cars will need to ride the Church line during the night.

The June meeting was held in the sand



Vicki Rosen, president of the residents’ group Upper Noe Neighbors, is hopeful some new trees will liven up the bare patches on Church Street, such as this stretch between Day and 29th streets.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

pile in the children’s playground off Day Street at Upper Noe Rec Center. That’s because workers discovered asbestos in the building that afternoon and closed the center on short notice. (It was already scheduled to close down on July 17 for a major 18-month renovation, so the building will remain closed until the overhaul is complete.) Now Upper Noe residents are waiting to see if Muni will get in gear.

Budding Plans for New Trees

Plans to plant additional trees on Church Street are in the very early stages, says Rosen, but she and other Neighbors hope to brighten some bare spots on the street with more foliage soon. The Bureau of Urban Forestry at the Department of Public Works has agreed to pay for and install 10 trees before next summer.

Carla Short, a forester with the Bureau, explains, “We are funded to plant 268 trees in our annual planting allowance, and we try to divide those fairly among all the districts in the city.” According to Short, her department is looking into

planting two types of trees on Church Street: the *Michelia doltsopa* and the *Magnolia grandiflora* “Samuel Sommers,” a smaller tree than the better-known Southern magnolia.

The Church Street corridor from Cesar Chavez to 30th Street has potential sites for 30 more trees, but Upper Noe Neighbors would have to raise the funds for those—and the trees cost \$450 each.

Rosen says the group’s first goal is to get property owners on Church Street interested in giving up sidewalk space for a tree. If that goes well and more than 10 people want to plant a tree, the group may try to raise additional funds.

For now, though, Rosen and the Neighbors will be content with 10 new trees. “Greenery makes people feel better!” she notes. “It will be so great to increase the trees along that corridor.... The street will look better and it will cut down on wind and pollution.”

Eateries to Expand

Neighbors say they couldn’t be happier

about the four new restaurants set to open soon near the south end of Church Street. “It reminds me of Manhattan, that we will be able to walk everywhere,” says Hampton.

The eateries scheduled to open their doors this summer are the breakfast-lunch restaurant Toast, which will take over Hungry Joe’s space at 1748 Church Street; Joey and Eddie’s Seafood, slated to fill Yianni’s old spot on Church near 29th Street; and the French Bistro 1689, in the space formerly occupied by Long Island Restaurant at 1689 Church Street.

According to owner Roy Lui’s wife Chanel Liu, the California-Asian restaurant her husband will co-own in the old Mikeytom Market location may open this fall, but might not be ready to greet customers until as late as December. She says they still haven’t decided on the restaurant’s name.

“It really is fun,” Radcliffe says of the changes to the neighborhood. “Our end of Church street is getting a nice facelift with the additions.”



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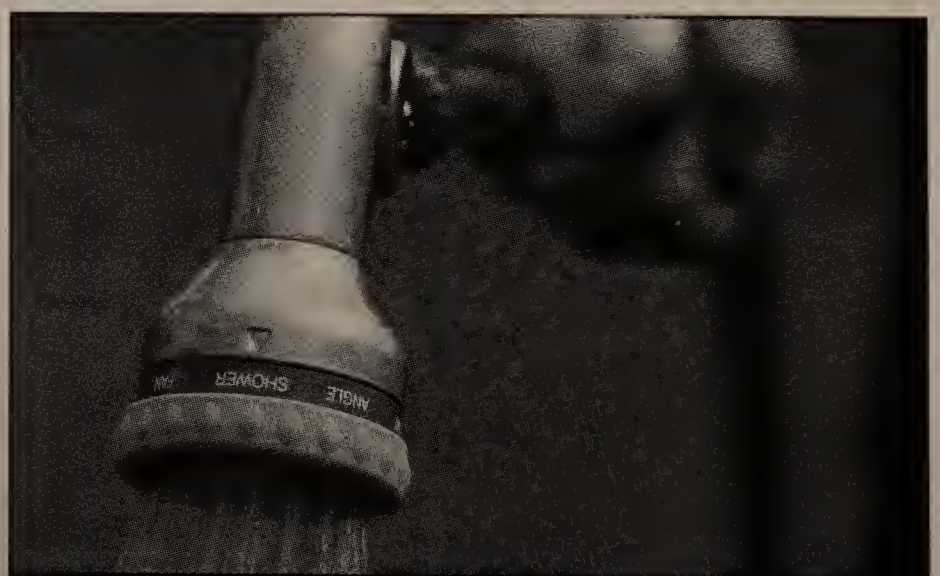
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LOCAL GEMS

Common Scents

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"something fun to do, an adventure for us," says Norris. "I really liked the Berkeley store. And it seemed like a trend that we would enjoy doing—helping save the environment."

Norris lived on 23rd Street at the time, so one day she and Ramey drove down 24th Street and spotted the space at 3920. The 80-something owner of the building was very particular about selecting his next tenant, Norris remembers. "He said, 'Well, there's someone who wants to make candles here, but I don't think that's a very good idea, so you girls can have it.'"

Rent Was \$90 Per Month

They rented the space for \$90 per month. Norris got her first credit card, and she and Ramey each pitched in \$300 to start the business. DuBois was the one who suggested the store's punny name.

The two women purchased bulk bubble baths and lotions from local chemists in Oakland and Berkeley, in scents ranging from Eucalyptus Mint to French Vanilla to China Rain. They arranged their wares in baskets and on orange crates foraged from the sidewalks of Chinatown. And soon they met the orange cat that was the inspiration for their cat-in-a-tub logo design.

"Six-Pack was a kitten who lived upstairs, but he used to hang out down here," Ramey remembers. Eventually the neighbors left him to Ramey and Norris, and Six-Pack became the community draw to Common Scents. "We'd have no business at all, but the kids would come in and say, 'Is Six-Pack here?'"

"To this day, people still come in and say, 'Oh, remember Six-Pack?' And then you know they've been here for ages."

Dedicated Customers

It's Friday morning, and at the same



Linda Ramey (left) and Helen Norris have been softening and moisturizing from their small cubbyhole of a store on 24th Street since the '70s.

Photo by Pamela Gerord

minute Ramey mentions longtime customers, Cheryl Price walks in looking for unscented shampoo. She says, "I've lived in the city for 20 years and have been coming here on and off. And actually, my mother, who lives in New York City, orders by mail. It's funny because in New York you can get all sorts of things, but she's dedicated."

Ramey confirms that they do mail orders, mostly with former customers who have moved away from Noe Valley. "We have a very loyal base of customers," she says. Store manager Jan Van Swearingen agrees. "There are so many people who shop here because they know they're supporting actual people. You can come in any morning and meet one of them! People will come in for something, and I'll say, 'We're out of that, but you can probably get it at Target,' and they'll say, 'But I don't want to buy it at Target. I want to buy it here.'"

Happy Employees

Ramey or Norris opens the shop at 10 a.m. Then Van Swearingen and employee Claudine Trittin-Richman arrive in the early afternoon and close up about 7 p.m. They also have part-time employees Dara Spanier and Deanna Chan. Van Swearingen says, "[Norris and Ramey] are the best employers. They couldn't be nicer. They treat us so well—health care and dental."

Behind the counter there's a wall of photographs of current and former staff, husbands, children, grandchildren, dogs and cats, and Six-Pack—the Common Scents family. "As you can see, we have a lot of parties," says Ramey. "Christmas parties, birthday parties.... We really socialize all together. Helen, Jan, and Claudine especially like live music, so they go out a lot. We're a real bonded group."

They love their customers, too. Ramey gets into a conversation with regular Pegine Quain about her T-shirt, which reads, "Running toward the pursuit of happiness." Quain's husband and friend are getting ready to run a 100-mile race. Ramey says, "This is what makes this business so interesting. Every person has a story like that. I think as far as our enjoyment of the business is concerned, it has so much to do with the people. We have really nice customers."

"Claudine is really really good with customers," she adds. Asked what she

does at Common Scents, Trittin-Richman answers, "Psychiatrist," and laughs kindly. "People will come in and ask questions, and pretty soon it will just lead to their personal lives and how they feel about the world. That's what I really enjoy about working here—the people."

An Ocean of Bath Products

And their customers love them, too. Yelp.com offers reviews of businesses by real shoppers. Poe T. wrote of Common Scents, "Nothing but love for this tiny, locally owned, little precious shop."

Another online shopper wrote, "This is a great little hidden gem in Noe Valley. It's a very small storefront, and you'd easily walk right by it if you weren't specifically looking for it. The space is tiny, but every single inch of this place is packed with products, including a variety of Kiehl's and comparable 'fine' bath/beauty products."

The bubble baths and lotions they started with 35 years ago still sell off the shelves today. Customers can bring back their empty bottles and have them refilled, to save \$1 and help save the environment, too. In addition, the store now carries at least 30 different lines of soaps, lotions, shampoos, deodorants, candles, incense, hair ties, massage oils, makeup, and toothpaste, including the ever-popu-

lar Thymes, Pacifica, and Tom's of Maine. They're willing to special-order products by request, too.

Not too long ago they received a deluge of requests for Jessicurl, a product for curly hair, which they now carry. And customer Shana Soulis reports, "This brand Nelsons, they were kind enough to look it up and order it for me. I like the acne gel and the calendula cream. I think their products are fantastic, and it was really cool to have it ordered."

Squeaky Clean Business

Norris herself builds the shelves that line the walls. She and Ramey share responsibilities for the store, trading hours and weekends. Norris does the books and Ramey, "What do I do? What is my specialty? I kind of come and hang out here," she laughs.

In the three-and-a-half decades they've been in business, they've never gone into debt. There have been some rough times, but they cut back on their orders and somehow bounce back. Ramey says they're actually squeaking by now. "It's very hard to be a small business in these times. There are a lot of expenses no one would even realize you have—employee taxes, state compensation, liability insurance, rent, and just regular bills."

Norris admits, "It gets tedious sometimes, but [not] now that we've got Jan! She's got enthusiasm for the people and the products and the store, so it's really made it so it's not the same old every day. There have been times when I thought, I just can't talk about another bar of soap! I just can't. So Jan does."

What are their plans for the future? Norris says, "As long as Jan's really happy here and wants to stay, and as long as our rent doesn't go way up, we'll probably keep staying here."

Ramey joyfully reports, "We've been here for so long that we have people who come in who shopped here when they were little children. And now they come in and they're bringing their own little children. That's when you realize how long you've been open!"

Voice writer *Kate Volkman* is doing a series on the history of businesses in Noe Valley. She also does genealogy and oral history for families and companies.

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This vintage Common Scents ad with cat-in-tub logo is from the May 1977 Noe Valley Voice.

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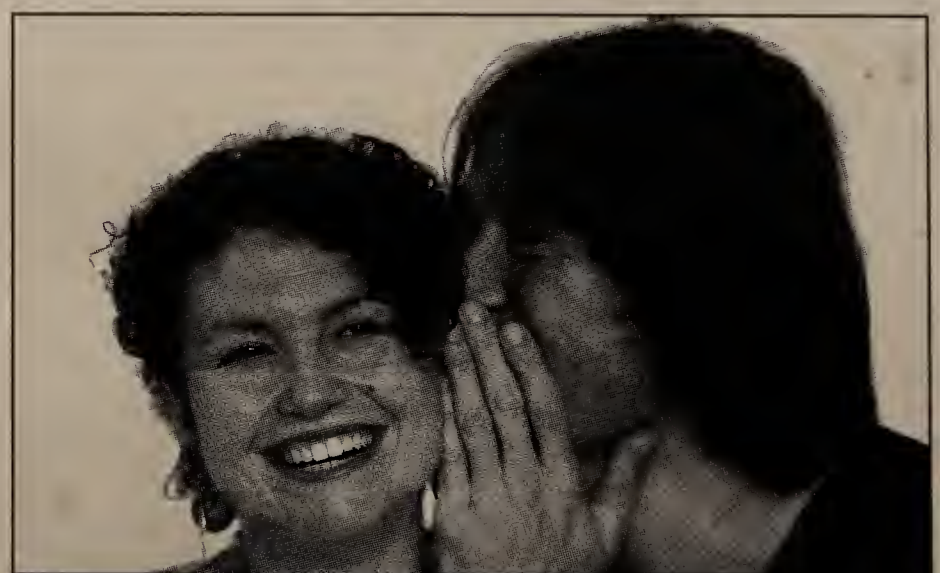
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(Trust Building Tip #34)

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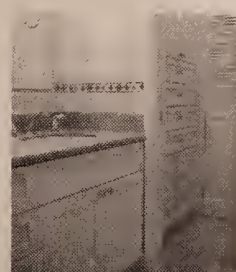
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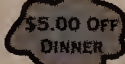
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Curl Up With a Good Book (or Album)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

overlapping, sometimes magical adventures of a restless Japanese teenager who leaves home, and a traumatized man fleeing his own mysterious demons.

Adult fans of Daniel Handler (a.k.a. Lemony Snicket) will find the author's trademark wit and wordplay, intertwined with provocative musings on love, in his latest novel, *Adverbs*, a collection of 16 interconnected plotlines.

For good reads on the cheap, McLaughlin suggests checking out the discounted section of publishers' overstock at Phoenix Books for bargains (approximately \$5) on titles like T.C. Boyle's *Drop City*, Bob Dylan's *Tarantula*, and Ann Patchett's memoir *Truth and Beauty*.

Tracy Wynne, co-owner of Cover to Cover Booksellers, has a few suggestions of her own. Many people have been stopping in the store to pick up Luis Alberto Urrea's *The Hummingbird's Daughter*, the city's pick for this year's One City One Book program. One City One Book encourages city residents to read the novel over the summer and participate in a series of discussions and special events featuring the book this fall. Set in pre-revolutionary Mexico, the novel follows a young girl grappling with her destiny as a healer and leader of the people.

Another popular title at Cover to Cover is Lauren Weisberger's *The Devil Wears Prada*, a novel about a fresh-out-of-college aspiring writer who snags a job as the assistant to the ruthless editor of a fashion magazine, a scenario that closely mimics the author's own experience as the tortured assistant to *Vogue*'s Anna Wintour. The movie of the same name hits theaters later this month and stars Meryl Streep, Anne Hathaway, and Adrian Grenier.

Nonfiction Stars: Soccer and Sharks

For anyone who's come down with a case of World Cup fever this summer, Wynne suggests *The Thinking Fan's Guide to the World Cup*, by Matt Weiland and Sean Wilsey, and Franklin Foer's *How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization*.

Sunday Money by Jeff MacGregor is another of Wynne's top picks. In an attempt to understand the NASCAR phenomenon, the author and his photographer wife hit the road in an RV and began traveling from race to race in 2001. The resulting story is a mixture of the sport's history, an explanation of its appeal to millions of fans, and the couple's own introduction to a sport neither previously understood.

"It's one of the best books about sports since *Seabiscuit*," Wynne says.

Wynne also recommends Michael Pollan's *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, out in hardback. The author writes about the paradoxical nature of our modern eating habits and explores how our society can be both obsessed with food and dieting and blind to the realities of food production.

For a read with local flavor, *The Devil's Teeth* by Susan Casey delves into the mysterious world of great white sharks who visit the Farallon Islands each fall to feast on seals and sea lions. Along with groundbreaking insight into shark behavior from two biologists featured in book, Casey delivers background and historical information about the island habitat that will fascinate Bay Area readers.

McLaughlin says an excellent memoir out this year in paperback is the *Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls, whose childhood was shaped by neurotic, neglectful parents who thought nomadic living was more of an adventure than an experiment in homelessness. Forced to dumpster-



Picture books are what 2-year-old Cassi Goorin likes to read, especially when her sitter Amit Shaham helps select them at the Bookmobile. The spacious mobile library is parked at Elizabeth and Diamond streets on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

dive for food and constantly move from place to place, Walls recounts her quirky, troubled childhood with honesty and a tinge of humor.

The Case of the Rebuilt Kitchen

There's just something about a suspenseful whodunit that fits perfectly with the summer season. Luckily, fans of the mystery genre have a bevy of options for fast-paced, thrilling reads.

San Francisco Mystery Bookstore owner Diane Kudisch has a slew of suggestions for mystery lovers. Janet Evanovich's *Twelve Sharp* is the latest in the author's Stephanie Plum books, which follow a hapless bounty hunter on her wild adventures tracking criminals and wackos. Jaqueline Winspear's Maisie Dobbs mystery series continues with *Pardonable Lies*, and Laurie King's San Francisco heroine Kate Martinelli returns in *The Art of Detection*. (You might recognize yourself in King's book: Kate and her psychotherapist partner Lee are residents of a Noe Valley Victorian that's undergone an extensive remodeling.)

Ken Bruen, who Kudisch describes as a "wonderful Irish author who does dark police procedurals in Dublin," is out with *The Dramatist*, which follows a gritty police detective through a series of dramatic homicide investigations.

For those seeking a classic mystery, Kudisch suggests anything by authors Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, or Ross MacDonald.

Of the latter's crime novels, she says: "His books take a look at a part of southern California that just doesn't exist anymore, when there were orange groves right down Hollywood Boulevard."

Tales of Despereaux and Olivia the Pig

For young readers, Wynne recommends Gennifer Choldenko's *Al Capone Does My Shirts*. The central character, Moose Flanagan, is the 12-year-old son of an electrician hired to work at Alcatraz prison during the Depression era. Along with his parents and autistic sister, Moose struggles with life on the island, where his antics often get him into trouble.

Another Wynne pick for middle school readers is Kirsten Miller's *Kiki Strike*, a fast-paced adventure starring seventh-grader Ananka Fishbein and a mysterious cast of girls who embark upon a journey into an underground network of tunnels below Manhattan, known as Shadow City.

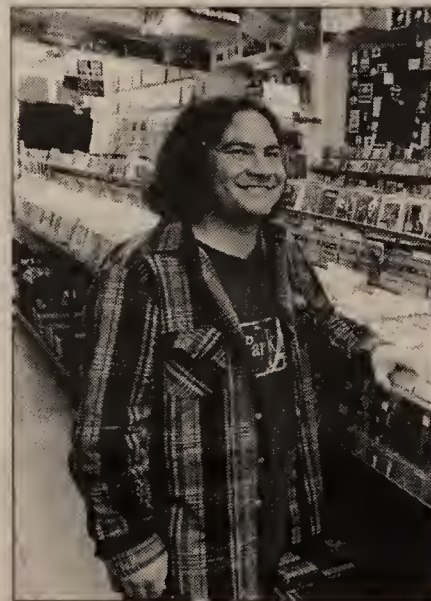
Wynne also suggests Kate DiCamillo's *Tale of Despereaux*, a fanciful story about a mouse in love with a beautiful princess, an unusual castle rat, and an unfortunate girl who dreams of becoming royalty.

For budding readers, McLaughlin recommends Ian Falconer's *Olivia Forms a Band*. The illustrated book follows Olivia the pig as she attempts to create a band in time for that evening's fireworks show.

And for the budding detective in your family? Kudisch suggests a classic Nancy Drew book. "They're always good for the kids," she says.

Books and Music for the Road

Enjoying books this summer doesn't have to involve your eyes. Audio books are ideal accessories for road trips and



If music is your summer mantra, Streetlight Records has got the tunes, from CDs to vinyl. Assistant Manager Mike Dineen will be glad to guide you to your favorite genre.

Photos by Pamela Gerard

long commutes, but they are often expensive. Phoenix Books offers a lending library of audio offerings that includes contemporary bestsellers like Dan Brown's *Da Vinci Code* and Andrew Sean Greer's *The Confessions of Max Tivoli*, as well as mysteries and classics. Rental rates are .50/day or \$2.50/week, and there is no rental time limit—perfect for that weeklong road trip.

For poetry fans, Wynne suggests the audio book *Billy Collins Live: A Performance at the Peter Norton Symphony Space*. "He's a really good reader," she says.

Last but not least, Streetlight Records has a few suggestions for your summer listening pleasure.

For the fan of the dark new brand of folk rock hitting the airwaves these days, *The Sun Awakens* from Ben Chasny's Six Organs of Admittance is one to try. Classic rock and country music lovers will want to grab the new *Gram Parsons: The Complete Reprise Sessions*, a three-disc box set of the legendary country rocker's recordings. *All the Road Running* from Mark Knopfler and Emmylou Harris, released in April, is the result of seven years' of collaboration between the two.

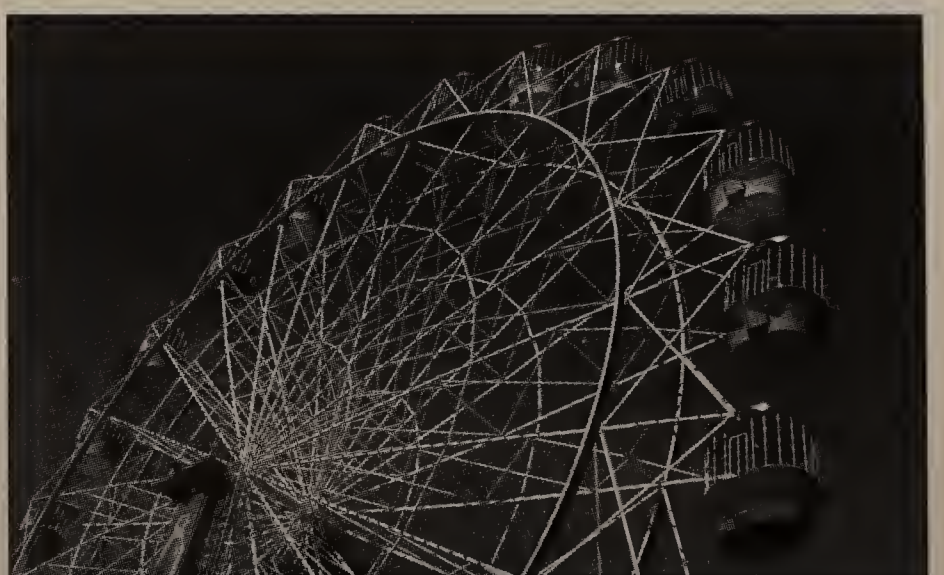
Another of Streetlight's summer music suggestions is the country-folk album *Rabbit Fur Coat* from Jenny Lewis and the Watson Twins. After relaxing to Lewis' soulful and haunting music, you might enjoy revisiting the Clash's digitally remastered rock classic *London Calling*.

To find suggested books and audio recommendations, head to Streetlight Records, Phoenix Books, Cover to Cover, and the San Francisco Mystery Bookstore, all on or near 24th Street.

Or you might want to browse the San Francisco Public Library's Bookmobile, which stops at 665 Elizabeth Street near Diamond (in front of St. Philip's School) on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Bookmobile stocks books, CDs, DVDs, and VHS titles for all ages, as well as magazines for home use. Bookmobile visitors can sign up for library cards, check out and return books, reserve SFPL materials, and make interlibrary loan requests.

Try not to get sand stuck in the pages. Have a great one! ■



{Trust Building Tip #53}

When asked to hold another person's funnel cake, do not eat it.

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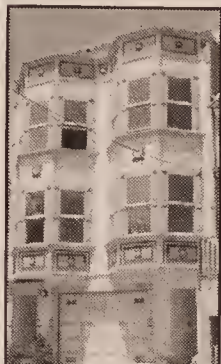
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- Liv/rm w/fireplace
- BAS finished in granite, slate and marble
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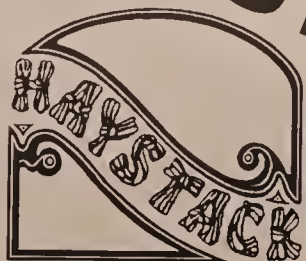
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Building a New Library—One Brick at a Time

Donate \$250 and Your Name Can Be Etched in Stone

By Corrie M. Anders

Fundraising can often be a chore, but patrons of the Noe Valley–Sally Brunn Library have been having fun this summer as they partied toward a goal of rounding up \$130,000.

The money will be used to help support the branch, an architectural jewel now in the midst of a \$5.7 million earthquake retrofit, when it reopens late next year. Local library lovers recently gathered for two lively events in “Downtown” Noe Valley.

First, there was a spaghetti feed, with Pasta Pomodoro on 24th Street dishing up bruschetta, rigatoni, and other Italian fare for a large crowd.

The May 25 event was “really well attended,” said Kim Drew, chair of the Noe Valley Library Campaign. “It was so much fun, and it provided great visibility for the campaign.”

The restaurant operators donated a portion of the bill of diners who identified themselves as present to support the library. Drew said the event brought in several hundred dollars.

Author Ben Fong-Torres, a Noe Valley resident, was the fundraising draw two weeks later at Le Zinc French Bistro on 24th Street. Fong-Torres read excerpts and autographed copies of his new book *Becoming Almost Famous: My Back Pages in Music, Writing, and Life*, a mix of current essays and articles from his days with *Rolling Stone* magazine.

At one point during the June 4 book-signing, Fong-Torres treated the turnout of 60 or so people to an impromptu round of song. That also helped book sales.

“Instead of selling at retail,” Drew said, “people were making a contribution to the

campaign, and for that contribution we were giving them Ben’s book.”

The book bash raised \$1,500, with Le Zinc owners Diana and Max Braud donating the use of their restaurant and providing hors d’oeuvres and beverages, Drew said.

The fundraising drive will continue this summer and through the fall. The campaign plans to focus on selling commemorative bricks that will be engraved and placed on the front patio of the restored library. The bricks cost \$250 each.

Approximately 45 of the 250 bricks have been sold so far.

Most bricks will be engraved with the names of donors or their children. Drew said some buyers have deceased family members they wish to honor and at least one person anonymously has purchased a brick to pay tribute to a community activist. “Some people might be surprised to see their names when the patio is unveiled because a brick has been purchased in honor of them,” Drew said.

The bricks can be purchased each Saturday at the Farmers’ Market on 24th Street, where the campaign has set up a booth. Shoppers also can buy a \$16 white-and-blue canvas book bag designed by Bohdanna Kesala, a neighborhood artist and a member of the fundraising campaign.

Drew said people’s generosity in pledges, contributions, and fundraising events has helped the campaign reach the halfway point of its \$130,000 target. “But we still have a long way to go,” she said.

Money the group raises will be used to purchase items that city funds will not cover, such as new computers, tables, chairs, shelving, and other interior fixtures.

The seismic upgrade began shortly after the 90-year-old facility closed in February. Construction workers recently completed hazardous materials abatement and spent early summer carrying out interior demolition. The two-story Beaux Arts building, at 451 Jersey Street, is scheduled to reopen in late 2007.

To get more information about the fundraising effort, contact Friends of the San Francisco Public Library at 415-626-7512, ext. 103, or e-mail Drew at kkdrew@yahoo.com. ■



Due to seismic repairs, the Noe Valley Library on Jersey Street will be a construction site throughout this year and next. Meanwhile, library patrons are busy raising funds for new interior fixtures.

Photo by Jack Tipple

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The Cost of Living in Noe

Home \$\$\$weet Homes

By Corrie M. Anders

Noe Valley's real estate market continued its perky ways in May, highlighted by the \$2.4 million sale of an elegant, turn-of-the-century house on 23rd Street. It was the most expensive home to close escrow during the month—and one of the most spectacular. The sprawling 3,382-square-foot-home, built in 1896, boasts five bedrooms, 3½ baths, decks, and a family room, and sits on an extra-wide lot in the 4200 block of 23rd Street near Eureka Street.

A total of 13 single-family homes were sold during May, according to Zephyr Real Estate, which provides monthly sales data to the *Voice*. That was one more than in the previous month, but two fewer than in May of 2005.

All but one of the homes sold for \$1

million or more. The high-flying price tags helped push the average outlay for a Noe Valley home during the month to a remarkable \$1.4 million.

Condominium sales dipped modestly. Buyers closed on six condos during the month, down from nine purchases in both the previous month and in May a year earlier, according to Zephyr.

Buyers paid \$1.1 million for the most expensive condo sold in May. The two-bedroom, two-bath unit is located in the 3700 block of 26th Street near Dolores Street.

Though the housing market remained "fairly active" in May, there were signs of softness. The weakness was reflected in a larger inventory of homes for sale and more circumspect buyers.

"We had quite a few listings," said Marcia Thomas, assistant sales manager in Zephyr's 24th Street office.

"But the premium properties...the nice properties sold quickly within two to three weeks," Thomas said. Buyers often paid more than the seller's asking price for choice residences.

"Properties that were overpriced [or] not quite as desirable are sitting around awhile," said Thomas. She said some sellers were forced to reduce their prices. ■

Noe Valley Home Sales*

Total Sales	No.	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Avg. Days on Market	Sale Price As % of List Price
Single-family homes						
May 2006	13	\$900,000	\$2,400,000	\$1,476,769	21	108%
April 2006	12	\$835,000	\$2,340,000	\$1,402,213	30	105%
May 2005	15	\$907,000	\$2,245,000	\$1,297,553	29	113%
Condominiums						
May 2006	6	\$629,000	\$1,110,000	\$817,500	33	106%
April 2006	11	\$650,000	\$1,620,000	\$995,318	30	103%
May 2005	9	\$525,000	\$1,114,000	\$914,110	21	116%
2- to 4-unit buildings						
May 2006	2	\$1,123,000	\$1,630,000	\$1,376,500	33	109%
April 2006	5	\$1,125,000	\$1,616,500	\$1,372,800	31	107%
May 2005	7	\$1,215,000	\$1,750,000	\$1,431,943	36	104%
5+-unit buildings						
May 2006	0	—	—	—	—	—
April 2005	0	—	—	—	—	—
May 2005	2	\$1,550,000	\$1,890,000	\$1,682,500	39	102%

* Sales figures include all Noe Valley home sales completed during the month. In this survey, Noe Valley is defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The *Voice* thanks Zephyr Real Estate (www.zephyrsf.com) for supplying the sales data. NVV 7/06

Noe Valley Rents**

Type of Unit	Number in Sample	Range of Rents June 2006	Average June 2006	Average A Year Ago
Studio	12	\$ 799 – \$1,500	\$1,205 / mo.	\$1,099 / mo.
1-bedroom	19	\$1,295 – \$3,000	\$1,879 / mo.	\$1,549 / mo.
2-bedroom	9	\$1,700 – \$5,200	\$2,683 / mo.	\$2,104 / mo.
3-bedroom	4	\$2,700 – \$3,350	\$3,038 / mo.	\$2,650 / mo.
4+-bedroom	7	\$4,200 – \$5,500	\$4,857 / mo.	\$6,500 / mo.

** This survey was based on a sample of 51 Noe Valley listings appearing on www.craigslist.com from June 10 to 15, 2006. NVV 7/06

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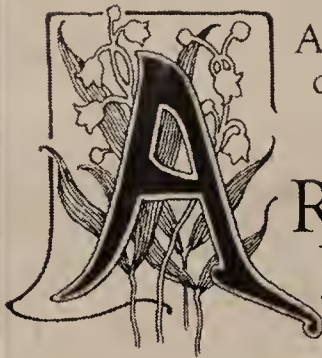
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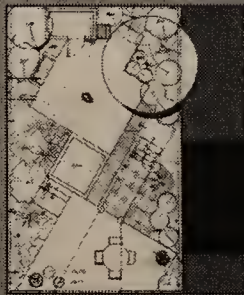
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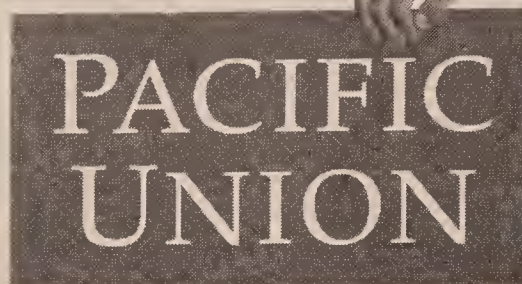
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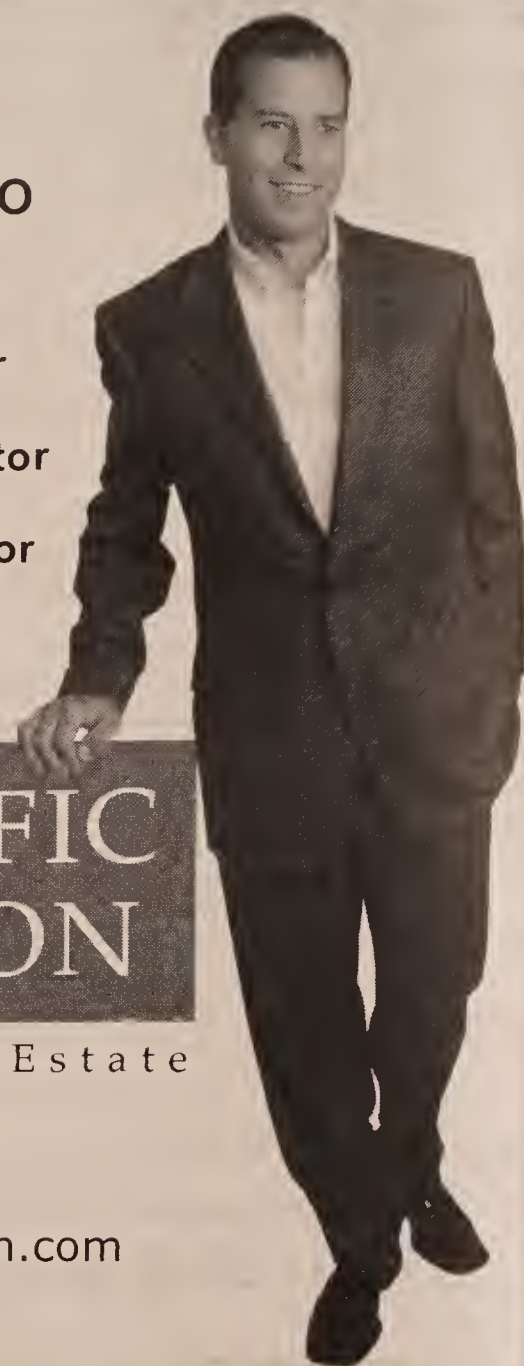
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Developer Throws In Towel on 39 Chattanooga

By Corrie M. Anders

For four years, a modest Noe Valley home built during San Francisco's infancy has been the flashpoint in an intense battle between a neighborhood developer and local preservationists.

But last month, John Williams abandoned his effort to transform the dilapidated 19th-century cottage at 39 Chattanooga Street into a residential complex four times the size of the original building. He sold the property in a deal that closed escrow June 20.

"Life's too short," said Williams, a resident of Elizabeth Street. "I spent years trying to make something happen there...but I just found the neighbors very difficult to work with."

Williams' decision to walk away from the project surprised members of the Save 39 Chattanooga organization, an ad-hoc group of neighbors and preservationists that had waged a public relations and political fight to protect the home's heritage.

"We had been working with the developer, trying to work out a compromise,"



This tiny 19th-century cottage at 39 Chattanooga Street recently changed hands, leaving open the possibility that it might be restored and preserved.

Photo by Jock Tipple

said playwright/performer Charlie Varon, a Save 39 member who lives next door to the Victorian home. "We thought we had been getting pretty close to one."

Neglect and time have taken a toll on the 986-square-foot, two-bedroom home, which may be one of the oldest houses in Noe Valley—and perhaps in San Francisco. City records indicate the two-story structure was built sometime between the

late 1850s and early 1860s, when Noe Valley was a sparsely populated countryside.

Even in its present decrepit condition, a buyer paid \$902,000 for the property—well above the \$749,000 asking price—according to Zephyr Real Estate agent Dianne O'Connell. "There's a lot of upside potential in that site," explained O'Connell, who had promoted the vacant home as a "rare opportunity to rescue a historic

Victorian fixer."

Restoration was far from Williams' vision when he spent \$681,000 to purchase the property in March 2002. He announced his intention to tear down the small home, which featured a gable roof and a false-front parapet, in order to build a larger, two-unit dwelling.

Williams learned about the home's pedigree soon after his purchase. With his demolition plan facing strong opposition from neighbors and city officials, Williams came up with a half-dozen alternatives that would retain all or part of the cottage and allow him to build a spacious addition.

He was still in talks with preservationists earlier this year. But after \$120,000 in carrying costs and various fees, Williams said neighborhood opposition had turned the venture into "a losing proposition."

The historic aspect of the building was a "very convenient handle with which to pitch all sorts of roadblocks," Williams said. "I've got some neighbors who don't want anything built in front of their windows."

The new owner's plans for the property were not immediately known.

"We're hearing it's an individual who wants to live in it rather than a developer," said Varon. "We're hopeful the new owner will preserve the building." ■

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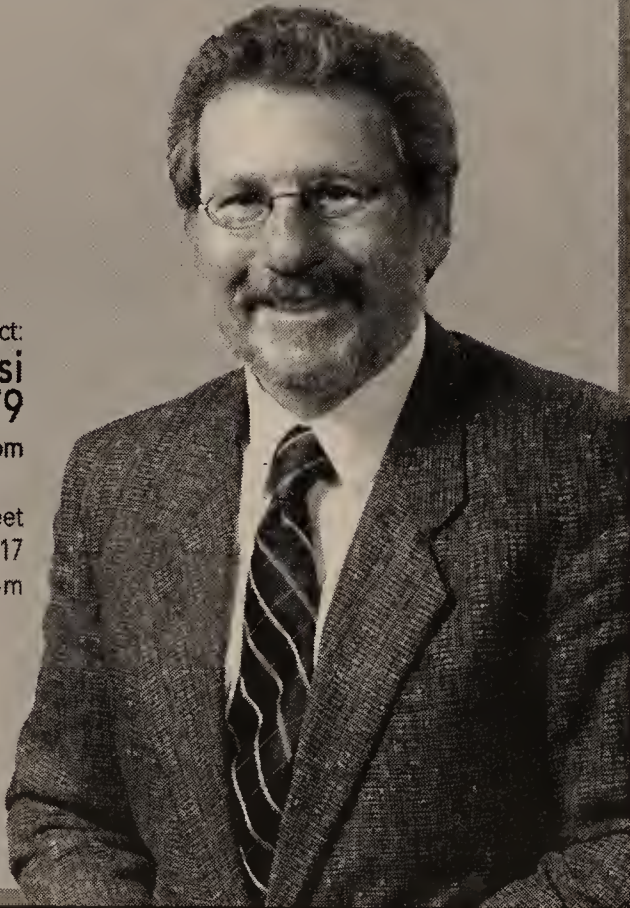


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—Robert Ingersoll, American agnostic, lawyer, and orator (1833–1899)

THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

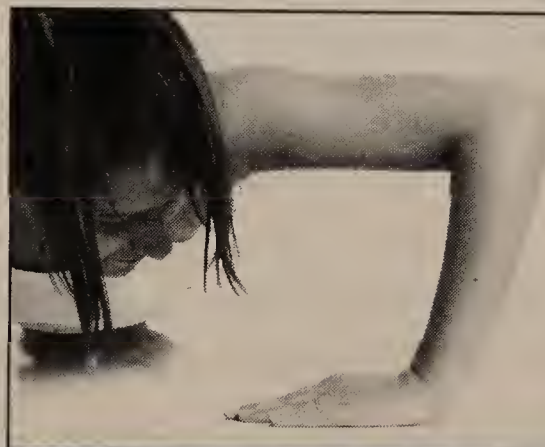
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POLICE BEAT

By Erin O'Briant

In a departure from past columns, this month's Police Beat is a review of crime incidents in Noe Valley occurring in the most recent month for which we have statistics. The area covered is bordered by Grand View, 21st, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The May 2006 crime information was culled from police newsletters and incident reports filed by both Mission and Ingleside Police Stations.

A church was burglarized, police made a big guns-and-drugs bust on 24th Street, and property crime continued apace in Noe Valley during May 2006. Also, three rapes were reported in the neighborhood (*see story at right*).

Several cases of assault, some of them with weapons, were reported in the heart of Noe Valley during the month of May. Many of them took place in the wee hours of the morning, including a case of battery on Sunday, May 14, reported at 1:30 a.m. in the 4000 block of 24th Street.

A string of aggravated assaults oc-

curred on or near 24th Street, including an assault on a police officer with a deadly weapon, reported on Monday, May 1, at 1:47 a.m. In the case of an aggravated assault with a deadly weapon reported at 10:20 p.m. in the 1200 block of Church Street, the suspect has also been charged with making threats against life.

Not all assaults took place in the evening, though: One assault with a deadly weapon, which involved a juvenile, happened on Thursday, May 4, at 3:45 p.m., and another occurred at 1:20 p.m. on Saturday, May 27, at 25th Street and Grand View Avenue.

Only a couple of drug-related offenses happened in the neighborhood, but one was a doozy. According to Ingleside Police Capt. Paul Chignell, his station's Arson Task Force conducted a probation search on Tuesday, May 16, in the 4200 block of 24th Street along with Daly City police and units from Mission Station. During the search, three people were arrested, two rifles, and three other guns were confiscated, and "a quantity" of narcotics was seized. In an apparently unrelated matter, a person was charged with being under the influence of drugs in a public place on Friday, May 19, at 6:26 p.m. at an undisclosed location.

Noe Valley's ongoing property crime continued full force in May. At least 16 burglaries were reported throughout the neighborhood, most of them by forcible entry at apartment buildings or single-family residences. Two burglaries took place at construction sites—one such break-in was reported on Friday, May 12, on the 200 block of Valley Street, the other on Sunday, May 14, in the 300 block of Douglass Street. Burglars seemed to focus their efforts on the blocks between 22nd and 23rd streets and Fair Oaks and Vicksburg streets. A church in the 200 block of Valley Street was burglarized the morning of Friday, May 12.

Vandals struck the neighborhood several times, breaking windows and damaging property. Two cases of vandalism happened on 24th Street between Sanchez and Castro streets, and another took place close by on Sanchez Street near Elizabeth Street.

Victims reported at least 13 cases of theft or larceny in Noe Valley during May. One was a shoplifting case, and eight involved either grand or petty theft from a locked vehicle.

As usual, cars themselves were a top target for thieves, with 11 auto thefts reported in the neighborhood for May. Two of those took place on Grand View Avenue and another on Douglass Street between 24th and Clipper streets. Meanwhile, car thieves targeted Jersey Street, too, reportedly stealing three vehicles between Noe and Church streets.

To make crime reporting easier, the SFPD recently launched an online reporting system for the following crimes: lost property, vandalism, vehicle tampering, vehicle burglary, and harassing phone calls. For more information, visit the San Francisco Police Department's web site: www.sfgov.org/site/police.

The Voice thanks Noe Valley Police Officer Andrew MacIlraith and Ingleside Police Station Captain Paul Chignell for their help in providing information for this month's Police Beat.

Three Sexual Assaults Reported in May

By Erin O'Briant

Police have confirmed that three incidents of rape were reported in Noe Valley during the month of May. Because of strict confidentiality rules governing the investigation of sex crimes, police were only able to provide limited information about each case. "We're not trying to hide anything, but we are obligated by law to protect people if they request that," said Lt. Dan Leydon of the Police Department's Sexual Assault Detail.

Asked if he believed the three assaults represented an alarming increase in rapes, Leydon said, "I will say that that's not the case in the instances in Noe Valley. I don't think that there is any spike or pattern in the cases."

As of press time, an arrest may have been made in only one case. The rape was reported at 1 a.m. on Wednesday, May 3, in the southeast quadrant of Noe Valley. According to Ingleside Police Capt. Paul Chignell, "A 24-year-old woman went barhopping with a man she met that night in a bar on Mission Street. He was well-known to all of the bartenders."

The other two rapes took place later in the month. The first was reported on Friday, May 19, at 3:45 p.m. According to the San Francisco Police Department's online crime mapping system, the rape happened in a different location but also in the southeast quadrant of the neighborhood.

On Sunday, May 21, at 12:03 a.m., another rape was reported in the northeast part of Noe Valley. The suspect in this case has been charged with forcible rape, battery, malicious mischief, and vandalism.

According to the Police Department's Public Affairs Office, both rapes and the associated crimes remain under investigation. Officers would not reveal the gender or age of the victims or the circumstances of the two later rapes.

In addition, the *Voice* reported last month that a rape occurred in conjunction with domestic violence at 2:15 a.m. on Wednesday, April 5, in the 2000 block of Castro Street, between Duncan and 28th streets.

Staying Safer

Although the crimes are frightening, Cindy Wandel of S.F. SAFE (Safety Awareness for Everyone) says, "It probably is a bit of a wake-up call, but I don't want people to say the neighborhood is going down the drain. This neighborhood is safe, generally speaking, but people need to be aware of their surroundings."

The best ways to stay safer, though, vary according to the type of crime.

Acquaintance rape, such as the incident that occurred on May 3, is one of the most common kinds of sexual assault. When out with friends at clubs or bars, Wandel says, "Stick together. Don't ever leave with someone you don't know or get separated with someone you don't know. If you get too intoxicated and you need to go home and you hop in a cab, make sure your friend knows you're getting in that cab and have them write down the number."

Staying safer from sexual assault by a stranger takes a different set of skills. "Stranger rape is usually less prevalent than being raped by someone you know," Wandel says.

According to her, both men and women should walk in well-lit areas at night, stay on streets with lots of people and cars, and trust their instincts. "If you're walking down the street and you see someone or a few people who look suspicious, then cross the street. When they interview survivors of sexual assault, the [victims] talk about having that weird feeling just prior to the assault. We have our instincts for a reason." She adds, "Even if people feel they're in a very safe neighborhood, [crime] does happen."

How to Contact the SFPD

Both the Ingleside and Mission Police Districts hold monthly police-community meetings.

Ingleside meetings take place on the third Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m., at Ingleside Station, 1 Sgt. John Young Lane, off the 2000 block of San Jose Avenue. Mission community meetings are held on the last Tuesday of the month, 6 p.m., at Mission Station, 630 Valencia Street near 17th Street. The public is invited.

Noe Valleyans who live north of Cesar Chavez Street (within the bounds of the Mission Police District) may contact Mission Station by calling 558-5400 or e-mailing SFPDMissionStation@ci.sf.ca.us.

To report anonymously on drugs, gangs, or other crimes, call Mission Station's hotline at 575-4444.

Residents and merchants in Upper Noe Valley—south of Cesar Chavez Street—may contact Ingleside police by calling 404-4000 or e-mailing SFPDInglesideStation@ci.sf.ca.us. The Ingleside anonymous tip line is 587-8984.

For citywide online reporting, go to www.sfgov.org/site/police.

To sign up for Ingleside Station's daily crime e-newsletter, e-mail Ingleside Capt. Paul Chignell at Paul.Chignell@sfgov.org.

To request the Mission e-newsletter, write Capt. John Goldberg at SFPDMissionStation@ci.sf.ca.us.

To report a crime in progress, call 911. To report a non-emergency event or problem, call 553-0123.

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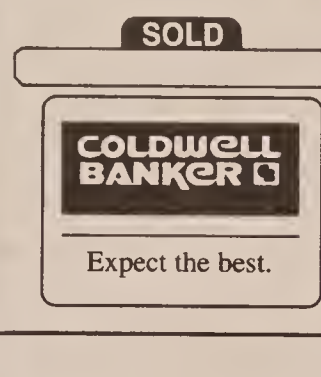


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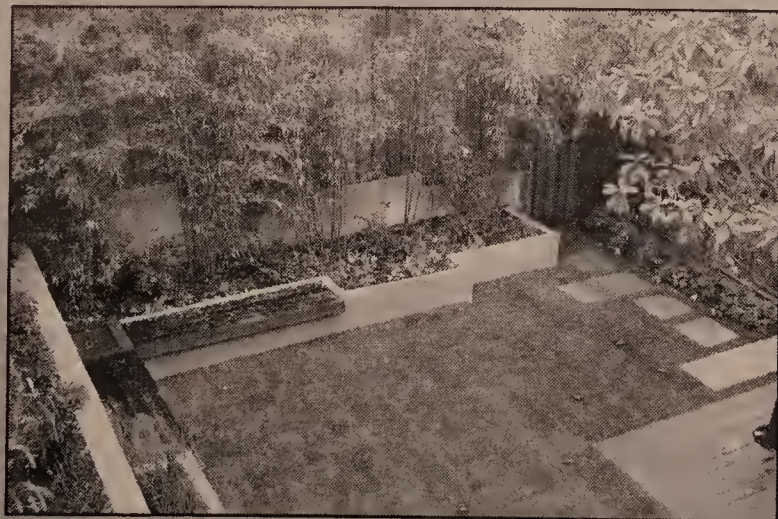
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SHORT TAKES

Logo, Volunteers Needed to Bring In the Harvest

The second annual Noe Valley Harvest Festival is ripening on the vine as organizers gear up for the kids-only logo contest and recruit volunteers for the October event. The music-filled festival will take place on 24th Street between Church and Sanchez on Saturday, Oct. 21.

According to Norine Traci-Maloney, the festival chair, "We will be having many of the same fun and exciting events, such as the pumpkin patch, stroller obstacle course, and, of course, the dog and children costume contest." The Noe Valley Farmers' Market on 24th Street between Sanchez and Vicksburg will be open from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. that day. The Noe Valley Merchants will sponsor a hayride, and many merchants and artists will sell their wares.

The logo contest is officially under way for all kids under age 18 who live or attend school in (or very near) Noe Valley. Get out your sketch pads and pencils, because the winner gets great prizes: \$100 cash, a free six-week drawing workshop at Artery, \$50 in art supplies, plus a surprise gift certificate. (The runner-up receives \$50 in art supplies and a \$25 gift certificate.)

The contest winner will work with a graphic artist to produce the final logo, which will be used on festival banners, posters, and other publicity items.

To participate in the contest, drop off your 8½-by-11-inch logo to Donna Davis at Forbeadin, located on Church Street near 24th Street, or mail your logo to: Noe Valley Festival Logo Contest, c/o Mary

Teahan-Duffy, Glencar Graphics, 3953 23rd Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. All entries received by July 30 will be considered. Remember, parental help is discouraged. E-mail norine@nvharvestfestival.com with questions.

Organizers will also need volunteers to make the festival a success. "We especially need day-of-the-fair volunteers to chair booths, sell merchandise, and for set-up and cleaning," notes Traci-Maloney. Prospective volunteers should contact Kathleen Welch at kath1684@yahoo.com. Artists and vendors who would like to purchase a booth at the fair, e-mail Donna Davis at forbeadin@pacbell.net or Lisa Sharett at leeseandals8@aol.com. Visit www.nvharvestfestival.com for more information about the festival.

Clean It Up, Drop It Off

Got junk you literally can't throw away? Now you can. The Gigantic Three program will bring large debris boxes to James Lick Middle School at 1220 Noe Street near 25th Street on Saturday, July 8, from 8 a.m. until noon. Neighbors can drop off bulky items for garbage, recycling, or composting. Used motor oil and filters, placed in plastic bags and separated from other items, will be accepted, as will non-automotive household batteries and unbroken fluorescent bulbs and tubes. Goodwill Industries will be on site accepting donations for reuse.

That same day, July 8, you also are invited to participate in the official District 8 Community Cleanup from 9 a.m. until noon starting at Harvey Milk Plaza at Castro and Market streets. Volunteers will paint out graffiti, create litter-free zones, and tend to trees in the neighborhood. All supplies are provided, and lunch will be served after the event.

Two weeks later, on Saturday, July 22, a Community Clean Team will arrive at the Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100

Collingwood Street. There, volunteers will get to work on gardening and beautification projects in and around the park. If enough neighbors want to help out, the cleanup day can be extended to other parks in District 8, including those in Noe Valley. "If there is a want and need for satellite locations, and there are groups that want to work at specific parks, that can be discussed and arranged," explains Naomi Lee of the Clean City Coalition.

For more information or to volunteer, call 552-9201, ext. 10, or visit www.sfcleancity.com.

Louise Brooks Expert Speaks at Silent Film Fest

Noe Valley resident Thomas Gladysz is half of the duo scheduled to introduce the 1929 classic German film *Pandora's Box* at this year's San Francisco Silent Film Festival. The film stars Louise Brooks as Lulu in what Gladysz describes as "one of the most iconic roles in film history."

Gladysz, who makes his home at 27th and Church streets, is the director of the Louise Brooks Society, which he founded in 1995. He also is the author of a forthcoming book on the actress, *Louise Brooks: A Film Miscellany*. Artist and filmmaker Bruce Conner, who lives in Glen Park, will also take part in the film's introduction.

The festival, now in its 11th year, takes place July 14 to 16, at the Castro Theatre, on Castro Street near 18th Street. The event will commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the San Francisco Earthquake and Fire by presenting archival newsreel footage from the Library of Congress throughout the festival weekend. Between films, The Booksmith will host appearances by film historians and authors in the theater lobby.

Seventh Heaven, starring Janet Gaynor; Laurel and Hardy's *The Finish- ing Touch*, and *The Unholy Three*, fea-

turing Lon Chaney, are among the other highlights. Special guests include Janet Gaynor's son, Robin Adrian, and Harry Carey Jr., who appeared in *Red River*. *Pandora's Box* will be shown at 8:20 p.m. on July 15. The festival reception is also that day, starting at 6:30 p.m.

For more program details or to purchase tickets, visit www.silentfilm.org, call 925-866-9530, or fax 925-866-9597 (an order form is available online). Tickets are also available in person through July 13 at the Festival Box Office, located at 833 Market Street, Suite 812 (open Thursdays and Fridays from noon until 5:30 p.m.). On the day of the show, tickets will be available at the Castro Theatre from 9:30 a.m. until 8:30 p.m.

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Go meet your neighbor and get a copy of his book when Nunberg reads and signs at Modern Times Bookstore, at 888 Valencia Street near 20th Street, on Tuesday, July 18, at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call Modern Times at 282-9246. Nunberg is also the author of *The Way We Talk Now* and *Going Nuclear*.

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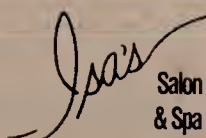


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A Musical Portraitist in Noe Valley

By Olivia Boler

Even with the popularity of the Bay Area's Kronos Quartet and the Sunday afternoon classical series at the Noe Valley Ministry, chamber music still has the reputation of appealing just to academics and the high-falootin' set. But Noe Valley resident and composer Belinda Reynolds would like to change that notion with the April release of her new album *Cover*, by Innova Recordings.

Cover is Reynolds' first CD that is devoted solely to her own music. There are a number of other CDs on which her music is represented, but all of those collections include other composers' works and are performed by a single ensemble, like the award-winning *Shock of the Old World* by the chamber ensemble American Baroque. For the seven tracks on *Cover*, several different ensembles perform only Reynolds' compositions.

Reynolds describes her music as "a sound world that is both familiar yet underneath very different from what one would [expect]. Anyone hearing it will feel familiar with it, in that it has melodies and harmonies that are rooted in classical music. But I like to turn it on the edge."

Turning classical music on its edge might be a good definition for the labels used to categorize Reynolds' work. Critics often call it "new classical music" or "post-minimalism." As Joshua Kosmann of the *San Francisco Chronicle* points out, the music on *Cover* "begins from obvious premises—a repetitive rhythmic groove, a collection of familiar tonal harmonies—but then Reynolds takes them in new directions and the seemingly straightforward turns strange and subversive. Never threatening."

Reynolds agrees with this: "I love playing with perception and how different people can approach my music from different listening angles, so to speak," she says with a smile. "I love playing with textures."

She describes a work she composed for the cello and clarinet called "Dust" that appears on *Cover* and which she wrote for a 9/11 benefit. "The piece seems simple but is actually daunting to play in that I combine the cello and clarinet notes in such ways that you can't tell which is which." The piece has an ethereal sound



"New classical" musician Belinda Reynolds, shown here in her composing room on 26th Street, is currently composing a string quartet piece for an international music festival in Utah.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

to it and reflects the way the tragedy of the day changed everything for many.

Reynolds, 38, has been playing the piano since she was 3—"I don't remember not playing," she says—and composing since she was 6. She grew up in a southern Christian home, and her mother and grandmother taught her to play old-time gospel and boogie-woogie piano. She attended U.C. Berkeley and Yale University, where she was classically trained, although she went through a rock/punk phase—"I played keyboards and bass with some *bad* garage bands"—and also spent time in India studying music in the 1990s. "You can hear these influences in my music in the way I use driving rhythms, strumming chords, and drones," she says.

When asked who her audience is, Reynolds immediately answers, "Anyone!" and follows up with a thoughtful discourse on how artists should be engaged in their own culture and why classical musicians have struggled to broaden their audience. Because our government does not fund the arts very generously, she explains, composers have had to find patronage through the private sector, mostly in universities.

"New music [becomes] removed from everyday life," she says, and has the reputation of only being understood and ap-

preciated by the well-educated. "That is crazy! I actively work at bringing my music to a variety of audiences, from schools to orchestra halls."

Part of that work comes in the form of teaching. A few years ago, she was a composer-in-residence and master teacher at Starr King Elementary School. She also offers private lessons through her company, HeShe Music (heshemusic.com), which she founded with her husband Dan Becker, who is also a composer and on the faculty at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Reynolds' students have varied backgrounds, and she teaches anything from beginning piano to singing. Additionally, she writes a weekly column for a webzine, newmusicbox.org, and through her company publishes her music.

And, of course, there are commissions. Most of her commissions come from music ensembles like American Baroque and New Millennium Ensemble. She's part of a collective called Common Sense Composers' Collective, made up of eight members who collaborate with different ensembles to produce new work.

She has many different projects cooking at the moment, including a commission for a string quartet performing this summer at the Park City (Utah) Interna-

tional Music Festival, and for Paul Drescher Ensemble's Electro-Acoustic Band. One area she wants to explore more is composing for television and documentary films.

With this busy schedule and years of fine-tuning, this mom of 2½-year-old Eleanor has found her compositional stride, and technology is the key. "I improvise every day, and we have a grand piano that is a player piano, but it uses a computer instead of piano rolls," she explains.

Once Eleanor is at preschool for the day, Reynolds loses herself in composing. One fun new project she's working on is called "Custom Made." It allows "regular" folk to commission a new work for themselves by working with Reynolds. The commissioner gets two bound copies of the final piece, signed by Reynolds, and the work is cataloged in the American Music Center library and the Library of Congress. They get to pick the title and, for a limited time, receive exclusive rights to performing the piece. It's kind of like getting to name a star after yourself, or, as Reynolds says, "Think of it as a musical portrait." ■

Cover, along with other albums featuring Reynolds' work, is available online and at Streetlight Records on 24th Street.

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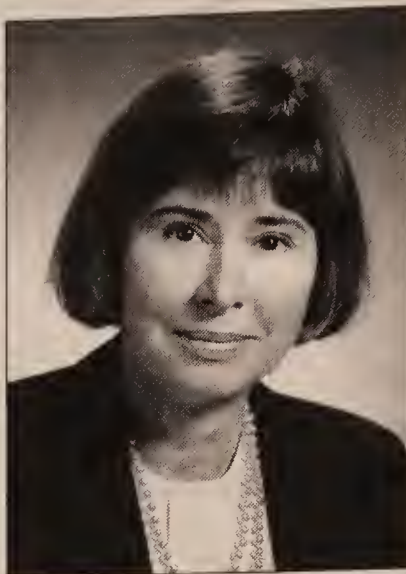
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· JULY/AUGUST 2006 ·

July 1: Donald Runnicles conducts the S.F. OPERA ORCHESTRA and its acclaimed stars from this summer's season for an afternoon of opera in the park. 2 pm. Dolores Park. www.sf-opera.com.

July 1, 2, 8 & 22: UCSF offers a one-day intensive CHILOBIRTH PREPARATION workshop for expectant parents 6:30-9 pm. Women's Health Resource Center, 2356 Sutter St. 353-2667; www.ucsf.edu.

July 1-15: The Marsh presents SHERRY GLASER's one-woman show, *Oh My Goddess*, a comedy wherein a working man struggling with his identity finds his true destiny as a channel for the "Great Jewish Mother." Thurs.-Sat., 8 pm. 1062 Valencia St. 800-838-3006; www.themarsh.org.

July 1-22: BAUM FOR PEACE, the adventures of the "slightly world-renowned" lesbian playwright (Terry Baum) who ran for Congress, plays Thurs.-Sat. 8 pm. The Marsh, 1062 Valencia St. 800-838-3006; www.themarsh.org.

July 1-31: Precita Eyes leads walking tours of Mission District MURALS at 11 am and 1:30 pm Saturdays and Sundays in July. Meet at Café Venice (3325 24th St.) for the pre-walk slide show, at 11 am tours on Saturdays. Meet at 2981 24th St. at Harrison for all other tours. 285-2287; tours@precitayeyes.org.

July 1-Aug. 10: Creativity Explored presents NATURE RULES, an exhibit of mixed-media artwork. Mon.-Fri., 10 am-3 pm; Sat., 1-6 pm. 3245 16th St. www.creativityexplored.org.

July 1-Aug. 31: The Noe Valley SENIOR CENTER serves hot lunches for people over 60. 12:30 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. Call 648-1030 to make a reservation.

July 1-Aug. 31: Salsa, funk, hip-hop, rock, reggae plays nightly at the ELBO ROOM. 9 pm. 647 Valencia St. 552-7788; www.elbo.com.

July 1-Aug. 31: NOE STROLLS playgroup departs Holey Bagel Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11 am. 3872 24th St. www.noestrolls.com.

July 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29: Come see a special ANIMAL presentation Saturdays at the Randall Museum. 11:15 am-noon. 199 Museum Way. 554-9600; www.randallmuseum.org.



This photo of phormium is part of an exhibition of botanical photography by Julie Jaycox at the San Francisco Botanical Garden in Golden Gate Park July through September.

July 1-Sept. 30: City Guides gives free WALKING TOURS, including "The Castro: Tales of the Village" (Sun., 11 am, Harvey Milk Plaza) and "Mission Dolores Neighborhood" (Sun., noon, Church & 20th). 557-4266; www.sfcityguides.org.

July 2: Rocket Oog Rescue has PUPS who need homes. Come see, noon to 4 pm in front of Zephyr Real Estate, 4040 24th St. 642-4786.

July 2 & 16: The S.F. Botanical Garden offers a free guided FAMILY WALK at 11 am. Golden Gate Park, 9th Avenue & Lincoln Way. 661-1316; www.sfbotanicalgarden.org.

July 3-31: Volunteers provide free HOMEWORK HELP for grades K-7. Mon. & Tues., 4-6 pm (except July 4). Mission Library, 300 Bartlett St. <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>.

July 3-Aug. 30: Check out a book at the S.F. Library's BOOKMOBILE, parked at 665 Elizabeth Street (between Castro and Diamond). Mon. & Wed., 10:30 am-1 pm. 557-4353.

July 6: Green Party gubernatorial candidate PETER CAMEJO discusses his book *California Under Corporate Rule*. 2 pm. Modern Times Bookstore, 888 Valencia St. 282-9246.

July 5: All ages of children can learn a thing or two at a hands-on presentation on incredible INOISPENSABLE INSECTS. 2 pm. Mission Library, 300 Bartlett St. <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>

July 6, 13, 20 & 27: Brent Armendinger offers OWL: Older Writers Laboratory, a free POETRY WORKSHOP for seniors. Thurs., 1:30-3:30 pm. Bernal Heights Library, 500 Cortland Ave. 695-5160; <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>.

July 7, 14, 21 & 28: SF GAMES features board and card games on Friday nights, 7 pm to midnight. Muddy's Coffee House, 1304 Valencia St. www.sfgames.com.

July 7-8 & 21-23: SCOTT WELLS & Dancers perform new works and "Home Again." 8 pm. CounterPulse, 1310 Mission St. 435-7552.

July 8: James Lick Middle School will be Sunset Scavenger's Gigantic 3 location and Goodwill's pickup site. Residents can RECYCLE, compost, and drop off bulky items, non-automotive household batteries, unbroken fluorescent bulbs and tubes, used motor oil, and oil filters. 8 am to noon. 1220 Noe St. 554-6920; dpw@sfpw.org.

July 8: Join neighbors to sweep and pick up litter as part of District 8's CLEAN SWEEP. Bags, brooms, gloves, and grabbers provided. 9 am to noon. Harvey Milk Plaza, Castro & Market. 554-6920; dpw@sfpw.org.

July 8: Enjoy magic and juggling at Owen Baker-Flynn's FAMILY SHOW. 1:30 pm. Glen Park Library, 653 Chenery St. 337-4740; <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>.

July 8: The Boulder Acoustic Society, Iron & the Albatross, and the Hot Club of Berkeley bring jazz and RAG GRASS to the Noe Valley Music Series. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238; www.noevalley-musicseries.com.

July 9: A free demonstration on ORGANIC GARDENING will be given at the San Francisco Rose Society. 1-3 pm. County Fair Building, 9th Avenue & Lincoln Way. 647-4486.

July 8-9: Last chance to view exhibits (for free) at the S.F. MARITIME MUSEUM, which will go into "dry dock" for a two-year restoration. 10 am-9 pm. 900 Beach St. 561-7000.

July 9: Representatives from LYON-MARTIN Women's Health Services will be the guests at PFLAG. Support group 2 pm; talk 3 pm. St. Francis Church, 152 Church St. 921-8850.

July 10: Stephen Elliot hosts the PROGRESSIVE Reading Series featuring authors Jonathan Franzen, Jane Smiley, W.S. Di Piero, Katherine Noel, Jason Roberts, and comedian Nato Green. 7 pm. The Make Out Room, 3225 22nd St. 647-2888; www.litpac.org.

July 10-Aug. 31: Artery offers KIOS' ART CAMPS in things like skateboard deck design, beadwork jewelry, and Art Girls projects. 1311 Church St. 285-0235; www.arterysf.com.

July 11: Glen Micheletti performs a MAGIC SHOW at the Glen Park Library. 10:30 am. 653 Chenery St. 337-4740; <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>.

July 11: Share songs, stories, and rhymes at a LAPSIT for infants and toddlers. 10:30 am. Eureka Valley Library, 16th & Market. 355-5616; <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>.

July 11 & 18: Afternoon STORY TIME, for kids 3 to 5, kicks off at 3:30 pm at the Eureka Valley Library, 16th & Market. 355-5616; <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>.

July 11 & 18: By attending INTERNET 101, you can learn how to find web information more quickly. 2-4 pm. Main Library, 100 Larkin St. 557-4400; <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>.



Room on the Verge by Patssi Valdez, from the collection of Cheech Marin, is one of the artworks to be displayed at Chicano Visions: American Painters on the Verge, opening Saturday, July 22, at the de Young Museum.

July 11, 18 & 25: Librarians from the Noe Valley Library present LAPSITS for toddlers at 10:15 am and preschool STORY TIME at 11 am on Tuesdays. Bethany Methodist Church, 1268 Sanchez St. 647-8393.

July 11-25: The Kadampa Buddhist Temple offers introductory BUDDHIST MEDITATION classes. Tues. 7-8:30 pm; Sun. 10-11:30 am. 3324 17th St. 503-1187.

July 14-16: The S.F. SILENT FILM FESTIVAL screens classic films including Janet Gaynor's *Seventh Heaven*, Louise Brooks' *Pandora's Box*, and Laurel and Hardy's *The Finishing Touch*. Reception July 15, 6:30 pm. Castro Theatre. 777-4908; www.silentfilm.org

July 13 & Aug. 10: St. Luke's Hospital trains VOLUNTEERS the second Thursday of the month. 3-5 pm. 3555 Cesar Chavez St. 641-6538.

July 14: Visual Aid and the Hotel des Arts hold a BASTILLE DAY party and fundraiser benefiting Visual Aid's programs, which encourage artists with life-threatening illnesses to continue their creative work. 5:30-10 pm. Hotel des Arts, 477 Bush St. 956-3232.

July 14: Dolores Park Café donates refreshments for a "lunky rock-n-roll blues revue" and BENEFIT SHOW for CounterPulse. 8 pm. 1310 Mission St. 435-7552.

July 15: Pam Pierce, author of *Golden Gate Gardening*, shows how to grow garden VEG-ETABLES year-round. 10 am-noon. Garden for the Environment, 7th Avenue & Lawton. Pre-register: 731-5627.

July 15: Carl Winters, the KALIMBA KING, presents interactive singing, chanting, and stories with African thumb pianos. 10:30 am. Eureka Valley Library, 16th & Market. 355-5616; <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>.

July 15: Learn how to make a book out of sandwich bags or CO cases at a free Family BOOKMAKING Day. 1:30 am-5:30 pm. S.F. Center for the Book, 300 Oe Haro St. Reservations: 565-0556; www.sfbcb.org.

July 15: Youths 12 to 18 can learn to knit, try new stitches, or just hang out at Knit Happens! TEEN KNITTING CLUB. 2-4 pm. Main Library, 100 Larkin St. 557-4497; blevine@sfpl.org.

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• CALENDAR •



July 16: The 2006 S.F. AIDS WALK will benefit the S.F. AIDS Foundation, Project Inform, and other local service organizations. Sign in 9 am; walk 10:30 am; entertainment starts 12:30 pm. Sharon Meadow, Golden Gate Park. www.aidswalk.net/sanfran.

July 16: Ingleside Police Capt. Paul Chignell and Supervisor Bevan Duffy will attend a MEETING addressing recent gun violence in Diamond Heights. 2-4 pm. St. Aidan's Church, 101 Gold Mine Drive. 554-6968.

July 16: Poets Latif Harris, Gerald Nicosia, and David Meltzer read from their work. 4:30 pm. Bird & Beckett Books & Records, 2788 Diamond Street. 586-3733.

July 16: S.F. Animal Care and Control celebrates its 17th year with a FUNDRAISER 8ASH featuring food, music, and silent auction. Well-behaved dogs on leash welcome. 6-9:30 pm. 1200 15th St. 822-5566; www.FSFACC.org.

July 18: Bilingual Spanish/English storyteller Liz Mangual tells STORIES, for ages 4 and up. 10:30 am. Eureka Valley Library, 16th & Market, 355-5616. Also at 3:30 pm at the Mission Library, 300 Bartlett St.; 355-2800.

July 18: A SING-ALONG with guitarist Chris Molla starts at 11 am. Glen Park Library, 653 Chenery St. 337-4740; <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>.

July 18: NPR linguist GEDFREY NUNBERG appears at Modern Times to talk about his book on political language, *Talking Right*. 7:30 pm. 888 Valencia St. 282-9246.

July 19: Those who wish to care for children in their home are invited to a free CHILDCARE LICENSING orientation and workshop at the Children's Council. Orientation, 9-11:30 am; workshop, 12:30-3:30 pm. 445 Church St. 343-3333.

July 19: OPERA PICCOLA Theatre Co. presents *Hansel and Gretel*. Come early to be in the show. 3 pm. Bernal Heights Library, 500 Cortland Ave. 695-5160; <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>.

July 19: The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society kicks off a new monthly support group for people living with HIV LYMPHOMA. 6-7:30 pm. 353-1304 or 353-2220.

July 20-Aug. 7: The S.F. JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL celebrates Jewish cinema at the Castro Theatre (July 20-27) and at theaters in Berkeley, Mountain View, and San Rafael. For a complete schedule, go to www.sffjf.org. 621-0556.

July 20 & Aug. 17: SINGER/SONGWRITER Anna Maria Flechero performs jazz favorites at the Savanna Jazz club. 7:30 pm. 2937 Mission St. 285-3369; www.savannajazz.com.

July 22: Community CLEAN TEAM has big plans for spiffing up District 8 parks. Volunteers needed from 9 am to noon. Dispatch from Eureka Valley Rec Center, 100 Collingwood St. Project suggestions welcomed by Gia Grant, 552-9201, or Rachelle McManus, 554-6986.

July 22: CHEECH MARIN celebrates the opening of the CHICAND ART exhibition at the de Young Museum, with a Cheech speech and book-signing (noon) and music from Dr. Loco & his Jalapeño Band, La Familia Peña-Govea, Loco 8loco, and others. Free. 9:30 am-5 pm. Golden Gate Park. 863-3330; www.thinker.org.

July 22: Eighty-one-year-old MARY GDULDING discusses her adventure travel book *Explore the World Alone*. 10 am to noon. Dider Women's League, 870 Market St. 989-4422

July 22: Enjoy mural-making, artist booths, food, and music at the URBAN YOUTH ARTS Festival. 1-6 pm. Precita Park, Precita & Folsom. 285-2287; www.precitaeyes.org.

July 22: Heather Rogers as STARKD THE CLDWN entertains with magic and jokes. 1:30 pm. Glen Park Library, 653 Chenery St. 337-4740; <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>.

July 22: The Baguette Quartette plays Parisian CAFÉ MUSIC from the 1920s, '30s, and '40s. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series, Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

July 23: Kids learning to ride bikes, and their families, are invited to a RIDE sponsored by the S.F. Bicycle Coalition in Golden Gate Park. Meet at 10:30 am at McLaren Lodge (Stanyan & Fell). 431-81KE; www.sfbike.org.

July 25: Learn how to collect a SMALL CLAIMS court judgment at a free clinic offered by New College law school. 10 am. Civic Center Courthouse, 400 McAllister St. 241-1300.

July 25: Croon with the crowd at Lisa Atkinson's SING-ALONG. 11 am. Glen Park Library, 653 Chenery St. 337-4740.

July 25: WILLIAM BENEMANN discusses his book *Male-Male Intimacy in Early America: Beyond Romantic Friendships*. 7-8:30 pm. Eureka Valley Library, 16th & Market. 355-5616.

July 25 & 27: Children of all ages are invited to enjoy 8DNIE LOCKHART's international songs and music games. July 25: 10:30 am, Eureka Library, 16th & Market. July 27: 2:30 pm, Mission Library, 24th & Bartlett.



You can "Meet the Animals!" (and maybe feed a giant turtle) at the Randall Museum on Saturdays in July starting at 11:15 am.

Photo by Neal Margolis

July 26: All are welcome at the Eureka Valley Library's 80DK DISCUSSION group. 7:30 pm. 16th & Market. 355-5616; <http://sfpl.lib.ca.us>.

July 27: Heidi Engel will lead a SEMINAR on "Coping with Cancer-Related Fatigue." 5-7 pm. UCSF Cancer Resource Center, 1600 Divisadero St. 885-3693; <http://cc.ucsf.edu/crc>.

July 27: Sherrie Dobrott entertains children ages 3 to 5 with stories, songs and FINGERPLAYS about insects and gardens. 10:30 am. Eureka Library, 16th & Market. 355-5616.

July 29: The S.F. Bike Coalition sponsors a RIDE through the biggest parks of San Francisco. Meet at 10 am at McLaren Lodge, Golden Gate Park (Stanyan & Fell). 431-81KE; www.sfbike.org.

July 29: Help pot seedlings for HABITAT restoration at Corona Heights Park. Meet at Golden Gate Park Nursery. 10 am. Sign-up: 554-9600, www.randallmuseum.org

July 29: The S.F. Neighborhood Theater Foundation screens the MOVIE *Raiders of the Lost Ark* in Dolores Park. 8 pm. Dolores & 19th. www.sfnf.org.

July 30: Noe Valleyans will gather at the Ferry Building at the crack of dawn to run the S.F. MARATHON, a 26.2-mile race around the Bay. For details, see www.runsfm.com.

July 30: As part of Laborfest 2006, author NANCY MACLEAN discusses *Freedom Is Not Enough*, about struggles to integrate and gender-balance the American workplace. 2 pm. Modern Times Bookstore, 888 Valencia St. 282-9246.

July 30: Deadline to enter Noe Valley Harvest Festival LGD CONTEST, open to kids under 18 who reside or attend school in Noe Valley. Submit logo design on 8-1/2 x 11 paper to Noe Valley Festival Logo Contest, c/o Mary Teahan-Duffy, Glencar Graphics, 3953 23rd St., 94114; or drop off to Donna Davis at Forbeadin, 1195 Church St. 643-3343; norine@nvharvestfestival.com.

Aug. 4: ART FOR AIDS, an art auction to benefit the UCSF AIDS Health Project, will take place at Bonhams & Butterfields. 5:30-9 pm. 220 San Bruno Ave.; www.artforaids.org. (To view artwork before the event, contact ArtHaus Gallery, 411 Brannan St., 977-0223; www.arthaus-sf.com.)

Aug. 5-6 & 12-13: Woman's Will, the Bay Area's all-female Shakespeare company, stages the PLAY *Twelfth Night* in Dolores Park. 1 pm. 510-420-0813; www.womanswill.org.

Aug. 7, 14 & 21: Monday-night poetry readings are followed by an open mike. Aug. 7: Bill Mercer and Clara Hsu; Aug. 14: David Hadbawnik and Rodney Koenke; Aug. 21: Klipschutz and Tom Stolmar. Bird & Beckett Books

& Records, 2788 Diamond St. 586-3733.

Aug. 9: The Noe Valley Democratic Club will hold its third annual SUMMER FUN 8ASH and fundraiser. 7:30 pm. Bliss Bar, 4026 24th St. 641-5838.

Aug. 12-13: Japantown hosts the 33rd annual Nihonmachi STREET FAIR. 11 am-6 pm. Post Street between Laguna and Fillmore. 771-9861; www.nihonmachistreetfair.org

Aug. 13: St. Paul's Parish holds a 8LDDD DRIVE open to all. Call Jill Alcantar at 586-8911 to schedule an appointment.

Aug. 19: *Breakfast at Tiffany's* will be shown outside at Union Square. S.F. Neighborhood Theater Foundation. 8 pm. www.sfnf.org.

Aug. 23: Come see "Seeds, Grains and Other DANCES" by young people involved with Fly-away Productions and S.F. Oasis for Girls. Kids 14 and under free. 6:30 pm. CounterPulse, 1310 Mission St. 435-7552.

Aug. 25: City College offers a free older-adults support group, this week featuring the video *Relax: You Only Live Once*. 9:30 am-noon. The Sequoias, 1501 Post St. 551-1122.

Aug. 26: Browse dog-themed arts and crafts, booths from local pet stores, and food and drink vendors at SF DOG DOG DAYS of August picnic celebration. 3-6 pm. Fashion show 7 pm; *Best in Show* film screening 8 pm. Dolores Park. www.sfdog.org.

WE'RE ON THE BEACH

Whew! The *Noe Valley Voice* is on vacation—for a month. But we promise to rev up the computers in early August to get your mail for the Sept. 1 issue. The deadline for September calendar items is **Aug. 15**. Please send e-mails to calendar@noevalleyvoice.com. Or you may write *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Noe Valley events take priority, but we try to squeeze in as many other nuggets as possible.

NOE VALLEY harvest festival

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Volunteers wanted for 2nd Annual Noe Valley Harvest Festival, to be held on October 21, 2006, from 10am - 6pm. We are also looking for local merchants and vendors that would like to buy a booth space for \$200, or non-profit and schools for \$100.

Join your community by getting involved. We would love to hear your ideas.

Email norine@nvharvestfestival.com

KIDS! Logo Needed!

If you live or go to school in Noe Valley, you are welcome to ENTER THIS CONTEST!

You need to be 18 or under and your Harvest theme entry should be no larger than 8 1/2 x 10.

Parental help is discouraged. Use your imagination!

See www.nvharvestfestival.com for more information.

Mail entries to:

Noe Valley Harvest Festival Logo Contest
Mary Teahan-Duffy
Glencar Graphics
3953 23rd Street
San Francisco Ca 94114

Or Drop off at:

Forbeadin
Donna Davis
1195 Church Street
near 24th Street

Questions, email: donna@nvharvestfestival.com

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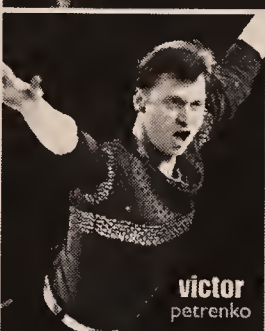
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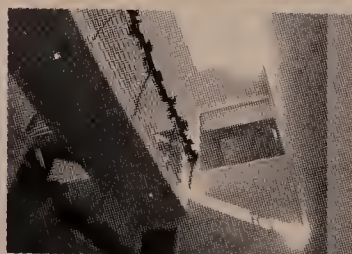
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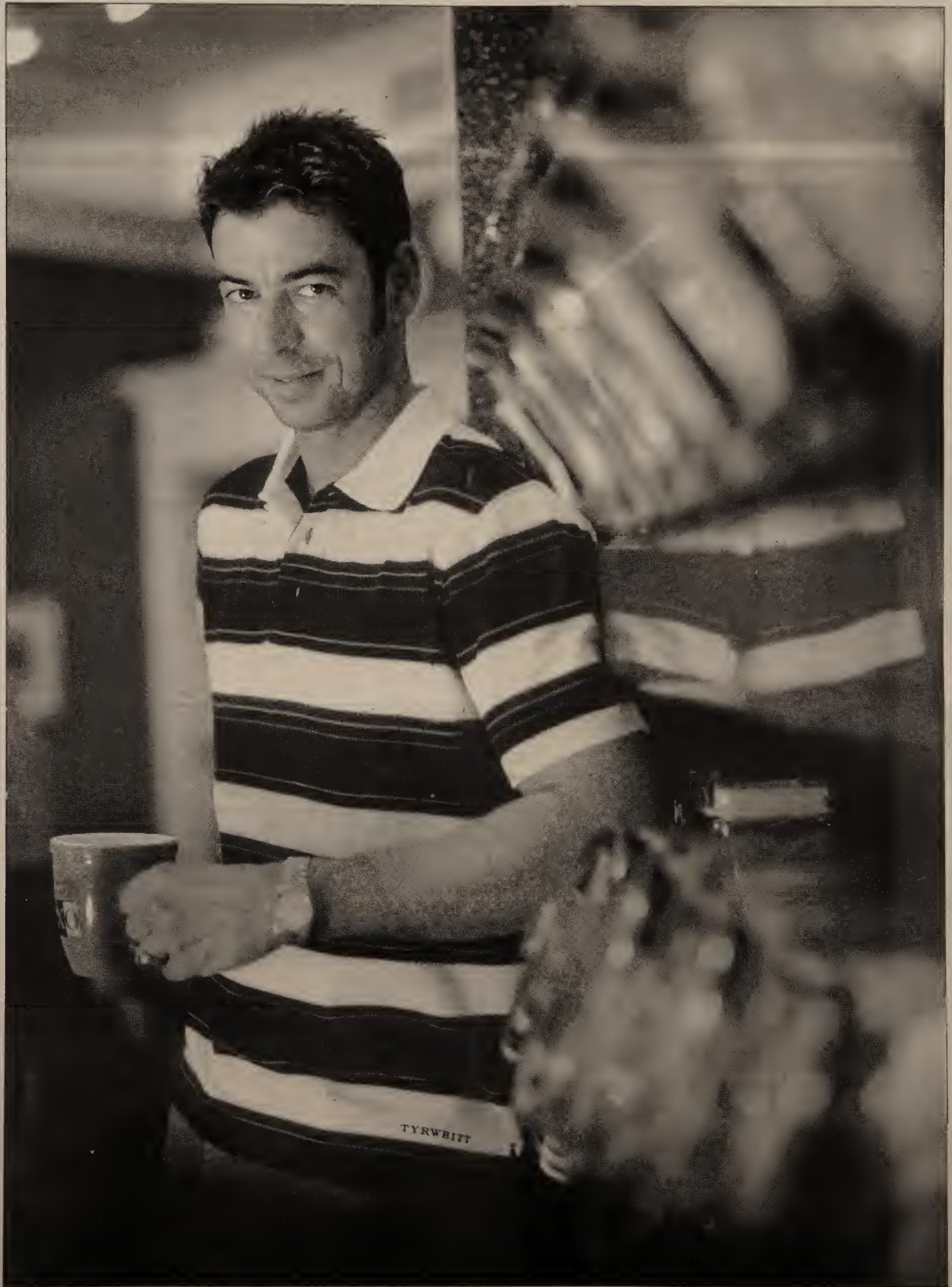
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Noe Valley Faces

Photo by Najib Joe Hakim



joe@JaffaOrangePhoto.com

From behind the counter, the tall man with the gentle smile serves you his trademark blend of roasted coffee. Those in the know will recognize **Adam Bousiakis** as the proud owner of Café XO, that comfortable spot with the delectable pastries on the corner of 30th and Church streets. Or perhaps as the former manager of Noe Valley Pizza on 24th Street.

Why did he open a cafe? "I like making desserts! And I like making people happy," says Bousiakis. He likes it so much, he arrives at 5 a.m. every morning to start work on a fresh batch.

Bousiakis has traveled far in his 34 years. Raised in Greece, where he learned to make pastries, he came to San Francisco to live with his uncle in

1989. Along the way, he modeled casual men's clothing and underwear for an East Coast department store and obtained his pilot's license to fly small private planes.

His café, which he designed himself and likens to a Venetian bistro, was a hit from the minute it opened in 2002. Bousiakis lives a stone's throw away, at the corner of San Jose and Dolores.

After his uncle died, Bousiakis was inspired to start a second business—a funeral home offering memorial services to the Bay Area's Greek community. He now conducts traditional Greek Orthodox services at Whitted-Williams Funeral Home in Oakland.

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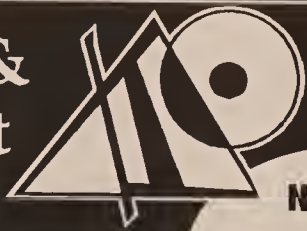

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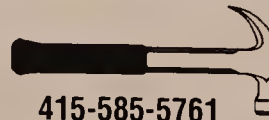
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Summer Films for Children (and Their Parents, Too)

By David O'Grady

On the dog days of summer—or a cool, fog-swept night in Noe Valley—sometimes the best escape is a good movie. Family films offer a great way for parents and kids to share an adventure and talk about it afterward.

Unfortunately, a lot of family movies—especially summer fare—avoid anything that might spark the synapses or prompt a child to turn to a parent and ask the dreaded question “Why?” But the following films, suitable for most ages and available for rent in Noe Valley video stores, tickle the funny bone, feed inquiring minds, and sometimes even stir the soul.

Money Problems of a Different Kind

What would you do if a bag of money suddenly dropped out of the sky and landed right on top of you? In the 2004 film *Millions*, this is the dilemma faced by brothers Damian and Anthony, the newest residents of a commuter-rail suburb in the English countryside.

For younger brother Damian, who has an encyclopedic knowledge of the lives (and deaths) of the saints, the money is a miracle to be shared with others. But for older brother Anthony, it's a chance to buy status and influence with the kids at his new school. Soon the brothers' personal conflict gives way to bigger problems, as Damian's startling—and often humorously misplaced—generosity begins to attract the attention of charity workers, their father, and a thief who's looking for a missing bag of money.

Images that mix reality with fantasy—including various saintly visitors who counsel Damian—give *Millions* a storybook quality. Director Danny Boyle, better known for dark adult movies like *Trainspotting* and *28 Days Later*, has a gift for viewing the world through a child's hopes and fears. Though *Millions* is a bit overstuffed with storylines—a

mother's death, a move to a new neighborhood, an intricate heist, sacrifice versus self-reward, and England's monetary conversion from the pound to the euro(!)—its excess of riches should stimulate great family conversations.

Rats in the Rosebush

In the early 1980s a group of animators led by Don Bluth broke away from Disney and started concocting a new kind of animated film. Their first experiment, released in 1982, was *The Secret of NIMH*. Adapted from the acclaimed children's book *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH*, the movie rechristens Mrs. Frisby—a widowed field mouse with a family of four—as Mrs. Brisby, but otherwise follows the book's plot: In order to save her family from the farmer's plow, Mrs. Brisby must enlist the aid of her friends, including the loveable but literally bird-brained crow Jeremy, voiced by comic actor Dom DeLuise.

Mrs. Brisby and her comrades face a wise but menacing Owl and the farmer's evil cat, Dragon, as they make their way to the lair of some very smart rats. The rats harbor a nest of secrets, including the answer to the mysterious death of Mrs. Brisby's husband.

The Secret of NIMH is dark in places, and the movie doesn't shrink from exposing the cruelties of animal testing. But its secret charm is its ability to transform an ordinary landscape—like a farmer's humble rosebush—into an extraordinary universe.

Heart of Gold, With an Appetite For Iron

Before animator Brad Bird joined Pixar and made the smash hit *The Incredibles* in 2004, he created an arguably more enduring and more soulful story in *The Iron Giant*, released in 1999. Based on a bedtime story that poet Ted Hughes told to his children, *The Iron Giant* is about a fatherless boy named Hogarth growing up in a small town in Maine in the 1950s. Home alone one night when the TV goes out, Hogarth grabs his gun and goes outside to investigate, only to find that a massive mechanical man has fallen from the sky. Innocent and inquisitive, the Iron Giant is soon befriended by Hogarth, who hides him in a scrap yard where he can feast on his favorite food—metal.

With Sputnik orbiting above and a Cold War chill in the air, it's only a matter of time before the giant's peaceful idyll on earth is threatened by a paranoid government, hell-bent on sending its sol-

diers to find and destroy him. But an army attack, especially if it endangers Hogarth, may only provoke the giant to unleash the firepower lurking beneath his steel skin, with dire consequences for the entire town.

The Iron Giant is not too subtle in conveying its violence-begets-violence theme. (Note the scene where the giant laments a deer killed by hunters—a direct homage to *Bambi*.) Still, the movie makes a strong case for peace, love, and understanding. Made before Sept. 11, *The Iron Giant* is especially relevant today and is on its way to becoming a classic.

A Doggone Good Story

Disney's first live-action film, *The Shaggy Dog*, has been a model for family farce since it bounded onto the silver screen in 1959. Movie audiences still find it huggable and lovable after all these years. Some even consider it better than the film's many remakes and knockoffs.

Wilby, a geeky teenager, has all the usual problems—a strict father, a mooching friend, trouble getting the girl—until one day he finds an ancient ring, one that carries a curse. Before long, Wilby falls under the ring's spell, turning into the neighbor's sheepdog at the most awkward moments.

Only an act of bravery can undo the curse, and Wilby may get his chance when he learns that the new neighbors are up to something. But he'd better do it quick, before his dog-hating dad (played by Fred MacMurray, in a role that presages *My Three Sons*) finds out that a “dog” is living under his roof.

Adults will find amusement—and a few groans—in the 1950s sensibility of this movie, especially its undercurrent of suburban conformity and anti-intellectualism. But it's best not to make too much of the simpletons celebrated by *The Shaggy Dog*. Instead, enjoy its uncynical

comedy—and marvel at how hard it seems these days to make silly yet well-crafted family entertainment.

Life in a Bathhouse for Spirits

Stylized Japanese animation can be an adjustment for older eyes raised on Disney, but adults and kids alike will be swept up by the engrossing beauty of the 2001 Japanese film *Spirited Away*. Directed by acclaimed animator Hayao Miyazaki, *Spirited Away* tells the story of Chihiro, a timid, bad-tempered girl who is moving with her parents to a new home. On the way, the family encounters a strange tunnel that leads to an abandoned amusement park—or so they think. Dragged into the park by her parents, Chihiro watches in horror as her mom and dad are captured and turned into pigs by the spirits who live there, leaving Chihiro to fend for herself.

With the help of a young spirit boy named Haku, Chihiro discovers that survival means working as a servant in a bathhouse for spirits. There she meets a variety of characters, from a smelly, blob-like river spirit contaminated by pollution, to the curiously charming balls of soot who carry coal to heat the bathhouse. By helping the spirits, Chihiro gathers the wisdom and strength to confront the sinister keeper of the bathhouse, who has the power to restore Chihiro's parents—or serve them up as the next meal.

At just over two hours, *Spirited Away* may strain younger attention spans; so kids might want to watch this movie in small doses, savoring each frame. But even those adults who think animated films are only for kids should pull up a chair for *Spirited Away* (and *The Iron Giant*). Like silent films, these animated adventures speak in their own magical language—and weave a spell to enchant your summer days and nights. ■

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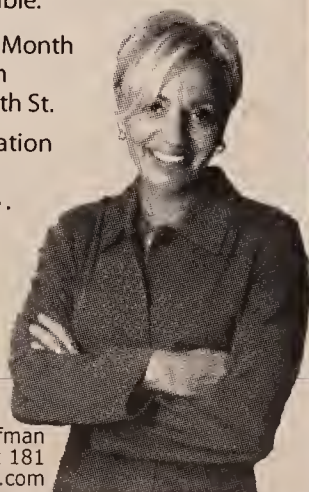
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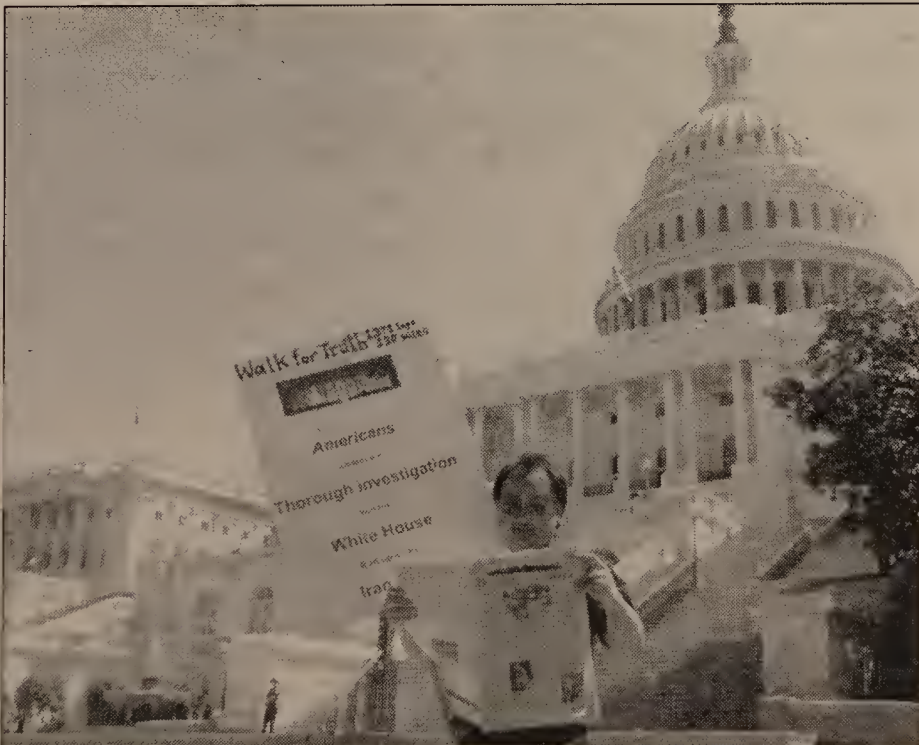
Maggie Kerwin and her mom **Amy Penticoff**, of 21st Street, kept their copy of the *Voice* dry while kayaking near the Jean-Michel Cousteau Fiji Islands Eco-Resort.



Jo Ann Stewart and **Judy Nelson** checked for Lost Pet notices in the *Noe Valley Voice* while visiting the Punta Tombo Penguin Colony in Argentina. No Magellanics were reported to be missing.



Brian Brockway didn't let his vacation to China's Great Wall interfere with a thorough reading of the April Fool's edition *Baloney Valley Voice*.



Craighton "Craig" Gee took a break to scan the news from home during his picketing for the "Walk for Truth" campaign on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Gee logged over 130 miles in laps around the White House and Capitol. More photos and information are on his web site: www.notesonamerica.com.



After a boat ride on the West Lake in Hongzhou, China, **Cheryl Drake**, **Jackie Duncan**, and **Fran Buchanan** (left to right) posed with a copy of the *Voice* that Jackie, a Noe Street resident since 1976, had packed for the trip.

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Illustrated Reminiscences
by Florence Holub

Life at Kingston Corner

There is a walk that I frequently take from our present 21st Street home to the corner of Mission and Kingston streets, a block south of 30th Street. Every time I reach "Kingston Corner," it is like a home-coming.

This is the place where Leo and I and our two young children landed when we returned to the city in 1950, after being away for several years.

At the time, inexpensive housing was hard to come by, and few people would rent to couples with young children, who were inclined to be noisy. But fortunately for us, my father owned the property where his business, Mickelson's Paint and Unfinished Furniture Store, was located at 3434 Mission Street.

Since he was in need of a new store manager, he asked me to try my hand at minding the shop for a few days. After a week or so, he decided that I could manage it, so he offered me a permanent job, as well as the adjoining living quarters—a small cottage—for our family of four.

This proved to be a wonderful arrangement. Because my father's paint and furniture business was a relatively quiet one, I was able to keep my eyes on our two young sons, watch their development every day, and get a paycheck at the same time.

Our oldest son, Michael, was in the first grade at Fairmount Elementary School, but our second son, Jan, was 2½ years younger and not yet of school age. So Jan kept me company in the store and began to learn about the business.

On Monday mornings, we went to the bank to deposit the checks and bills from the weekend sales. At the same time, we got bags of change to replenish the cash register. Jan watched all of this and naturally interpreted it according to a 4-year-old's logic. I overheard him tell a friend knowingly, "You just take a little money to the bank, and the man gives you back a whole bunch."

Without my guidance, he learned to withdraw funds from his piggy bank

with a kitchen knife, in order to invest in sweets at the 30th Street corner market. His philosophy was (and still is): "Money is no good unless you use it."

When he tired of helping me, Jan would occupy himself in the rear of the store, where my father's shop, full of hammers, nails, and a variety of other tools, proved to be a welcome stimulation.

Once Michael got home from school, the two boys usually headed out the side door of the store, which opened onto Kingston, a busy narrow passageway between Mission Street and San Jose Avenue. But there was a small fenced courtyard that separated the store from the rear cottage we lived in, and for years that play yard was a magnet that drew small fry from all over the neighborhood.

Our courtyard was often filled with high-pitched laughter and playful screeching, which was a terrible nuisance for some of the neighbors, but at

When Dirk, the inventor of the catapult, jumped on one end, a brick placed on the other end flew up in the air and then came down right on his head. It did no damage, much to our relief, but the incident put an end to the use of that ingenious invention.

Every few days, the children would come up with a different structure to build. But the most substantial one was the "fort" with a door, situated under the staircase to our house.

One day, my brother Warde, who worked with my father, came to pick up supplies from the basement of the store. He liked children, and especially appreciated the variety of contraptions that his nephews and their friends were always hammering on. So when they invited him to inspect their fort, he accepted. Stooping down, he went inside the fort, judged it to be of solid construction, and then discovered that they had nailed the door shut. There he was, locked inside, while the pranksters

became so involved in the action, he nervously and unconsciously unraveled the looped string rug he sat upon. He created a bald spot, but I sewed the loops back on that same evening—while I was sitting in his vacated spot.



First they constructed a slide. Then they dismantled it in order to build a seesaw, which was great fun until they converted that to a catapult.



On another occasion, an unfamiliar child came home from school with our son Michael and after spending all afternoon in front of the television refused to go home, telling us that his mother didn't care. But it was growing dark, and we finally insisted.

When we took him to the street where he lived, four blocks away, we were alarmed to see a gathering of neighbors, police, and a hysterical mother, who gave us an angry tongue-lashing. We apologized and made a hasty retreat, and resolved to check out every new face in our front room thereafter.

I'll also never forget the day I returned to the cottage after work and found our two little boys innocently seated on the sofa in front of the set. Since it was chilly, I flipped on the furnace switch, then went about preparing dinner. Within minutes, a strange odor began to fill the air, and then I heard a crackling sound that grew louder as the scent got heavier.

Alarmed, I ran around from appliance to appliance trying to determine the source, with the boys joining me in the pursuit. Then suddenly at our feet, the floor furnace began to percolate puffs of white until a billowy cloud filled the entire space beneath the heater grating. It smelled like popcorn—which is exactly what it was!

The boys had accidentally spilled the kernels earlier that day, but neglected to report the mishap. However, they looked so astounded when the popcorn burst into view, Leo and I decided a harsh punishment would not be necessary.

Besides, it was one of the funniest things that happened during our seven years of raising kiddies at Kingston Corner.

Florence Holub first wrote this remembrance for the July/August 1994 Voice.



Illustration by Florence Holub

least the parents among them could hear where their children were. It sounded just like recess at an elementary school. One cranky customer of my father's paint shop was surprised to learn that the store manager lived in the rear cottage. He said he had thought that just a bunch of screaming kids lived there!

To us, however, the courtyard was a blessing—a safe refuge located only 30 feet from the heavy traffic of Mission Street. As long as our children were there making happy noises, we knew they were okay.

In the courtyard was a stack of wooden odds and ends left over from my father's construction jobs—scraps that provided the boys with materials to build things. First they constructed a slide. Then they dismantled it in order to build a seesaw, which was great fun until they converted that to a catapult.

howled with laughter. Having been a mischievous youngster himself, he too found this to be terribly funny, and when he was liberated, he gave the kids a quarter just for the laughs.

Television became popular in the '50s, and although as parents we resisted it for several years, we finally relented after realizing that our boys were spending most of their time sitting in front of the set belonging to their friend Ray, who lived across the street.

We had to purchase a small used TV set in order to get our children back. And from that day on, our living room was occupied by a young, spellbound audience.

The children were completely mesmerized by the thrilling cowboy movies, and on one occasion little Dirk



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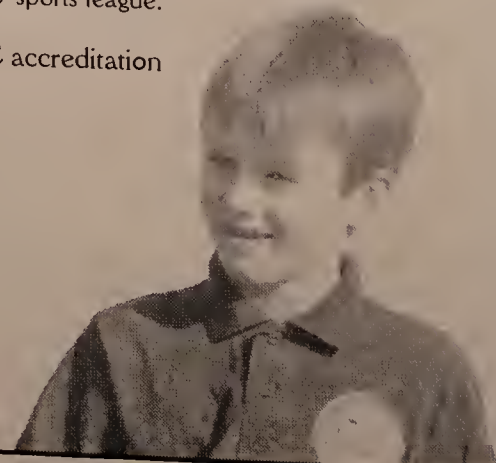
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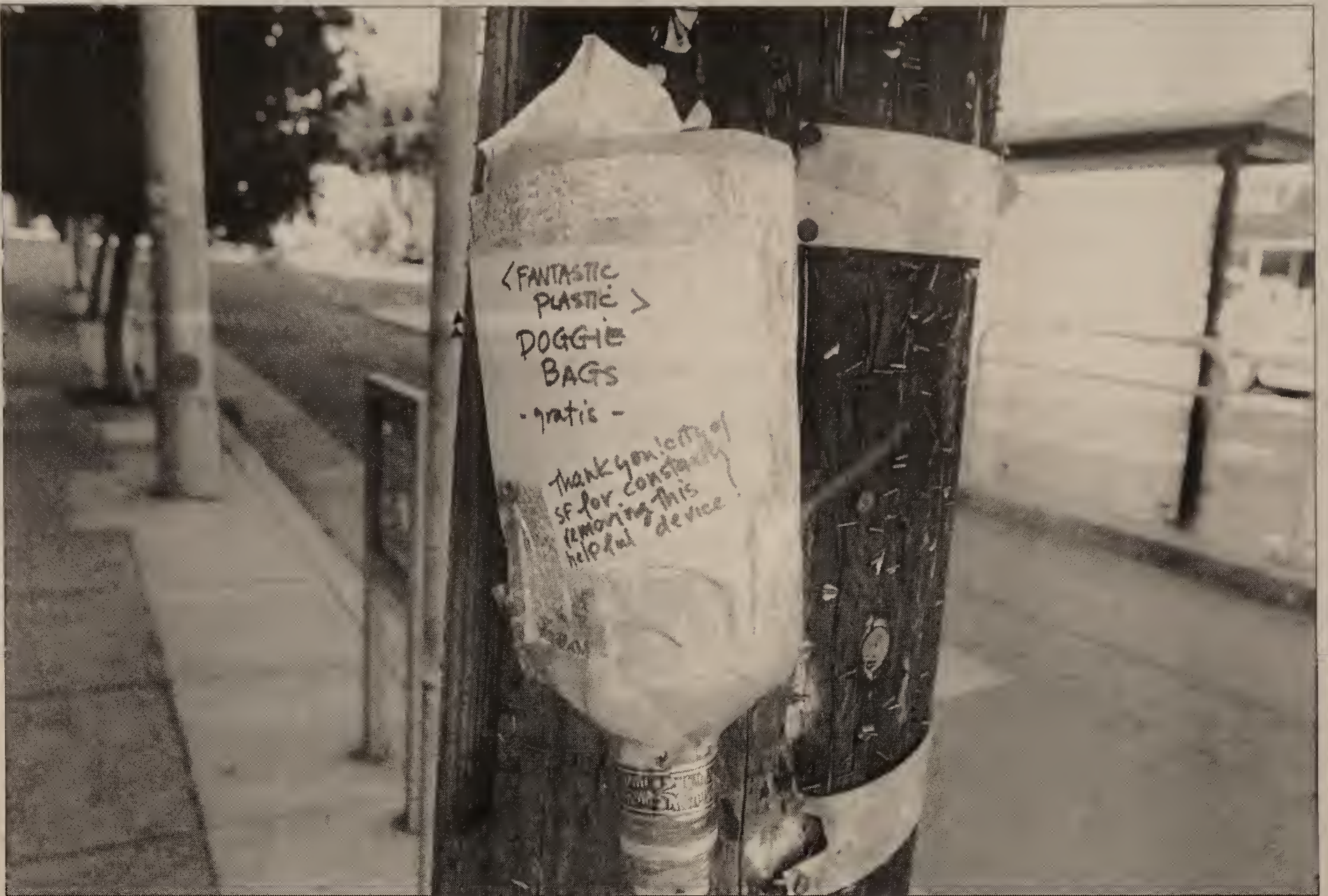
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Photo by Pamela Gerard

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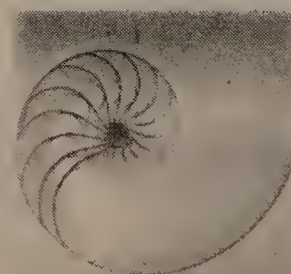
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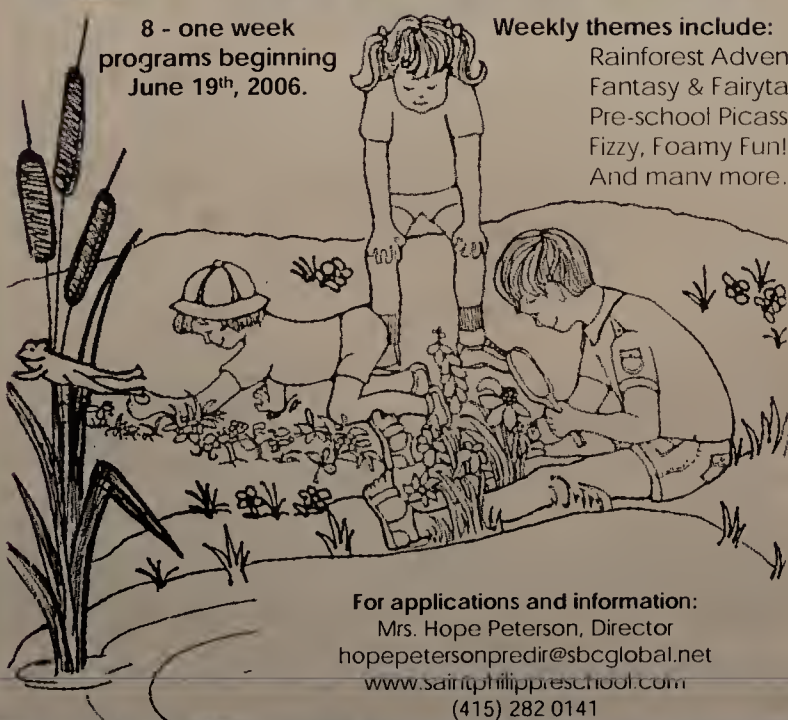
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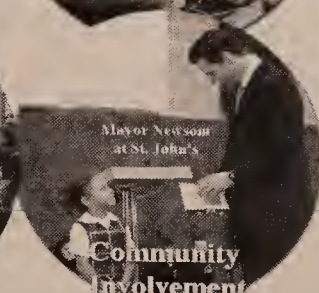
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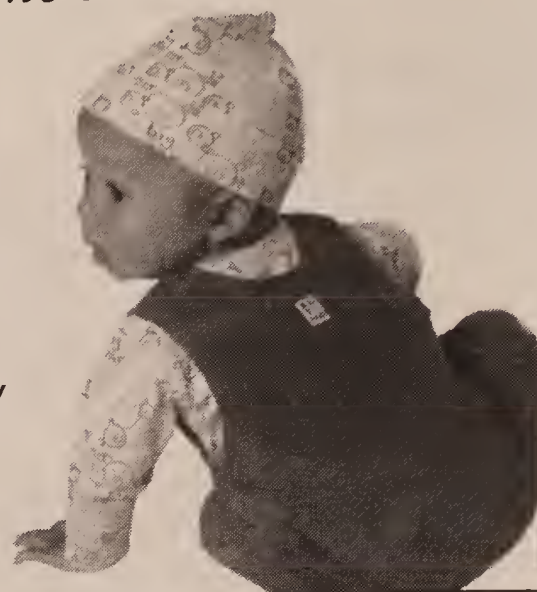
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First Day of Preschool

We walk into the carefully organized classroom, and the panic sets in. Not in Grace. In me. I notice every grubby detail that I must have missed at the orientation last month. Those kitchen toys are just jumbled in a pile. And when were those costumes last washed? The room is too quiet. Those cool toys are up too high where the kids can't reach them. The playground looks wet and cold. There are only boys here. Where are the girls? Will Grace be the only girl?

I am wild-eyed, surveying the room like a lioness ready to devour any threat to her young. Grace hugs my leg, prompting me to get it together.

"Let's put your things in your cubby, okay?" I say to my daughter.

This suggestion is exciting, and she

detaches herself from my leg to unload her backpack. We take a casual tour of the room, where the toys don't look so bad. In fact, some of the work centers seem pretty cool. I make a note to copy an idea for Play-Doh accessories back home.

We go outside, and Grace helps her teacher, Christina, get the sand toys out of the storage shed. I see a daddy, who is wearing a baby in a sling, dropping off his little boy. I breathe a sigh of relief that there are some other cool parents. Then I silently scold myself for thinking that using a sling makes someone cool.

A youngish mom with unusual facial piercings brings her daughter by, and I am relieved to see a girl. Again I scold myself for my bizarre attachment to

gender balance.

She's not even 3!

Who cares if she

plays with boys or girls?

After spending a few minutes watching Grace dig in the sand, I announce that it is time for me to leave. I crouch down at kid level, and Grace clings to me harder than I have ever felt. Her arms envelope my neck and she crawls up my body like she is trying to go back inside my womb.

"Please take me home with you! Please don't go!" she begs.

"Why don't you walk us to the door?" I suggest.

She does, and the teacher's aide silently follows behind. At the door Grace cries and begs again. I fight back my own tears.

After spending a few minutes watching Grace dig in the sand, I announce that it is time for me to leave. I crouch down at kid level, and Grace clings to me harder than I have ever felt.

"I love you so much, Grace. And I am so proud of you. You are going to have a great time today, and I will come back to get you later. I promise."

She still won't let go. I start to stand up, to force the separation, no matter how painful. Grace grabs the scarf from my neck so that it unwinds as I stand. "Can I keep this until you get back?" she says.

"Of course you can."

And just like that she switches into chatty, happy Grace mode. She turns to Roxie, the teacher's aide, and says, "This is my mommy's scarf, and I am going to keep it for her until she comes back." Then she turns and heads out to play.

And I feel okay. We leave the classroom and peek through the one-way observation window in the hall. The scarf is knotted around Grace's neck, and she is chatting away with Roxie.

I remember the game we played yesterday, initiated by Grace, where she said that she was the mommy taking me to school. She asked me to cry when she left, and then she said she would give me something to hold until she got back. I can't believe I didn't proactively

remember that game this morning. Kids are so amazing at making sure their needs are met, and yesterday she was definitely letting me know what would give her comfort. Grace knew what would make her feel better, and when I forgot to give her a little something of mine, she went ahead and took my scarf. Simply amazing.

Later, when I go back to pick Grace up, she doesn't want to leave. "But I'm still playing, Mama!"

I finally persuade her to head out to the car with a promise of a box of soymilk that waits for her. In the hallway, she talks and talks about her day. The words are a blurry chatter of kid-speak, and I have trouble making it all out. But something does jump out at me.

"I had fun, fun, fun at school today. It is full of love."

I am so relieved and grateful to hear this that I almost burst into tears. ■

Robin Dutton-Cookston is a fulltime mom and a part-time writer. She writes an online column called "The Foggiest Idea" and also self-publishes a parenting zine called Apron Strings.

Let Bylines Be Bylines

The Noe Valley Voice welcomes submissions of first-person essays. Mail manuscripts to Bylines, Noe Valley Voice, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Or send e-mail submissions to bylines@noevalleyvoice.com. Please include your name, address, and phone number. Thank you.

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MORE BOOKS TO READ

A craft book on recycling old sweaters and an essay collection about friendships among women are among the San Francisco Public Library gems highlighted this month by children's librarian Pam Ow and *Noe Valley Voice* bookworm Karol Barske. If you'd like to reserve a book, call your favorite branch or visit the Library's web site, www.sfpl.org. You may also check out the Noe Valley bookmobile, which is parked in front of St. Philip's School at Elizabeth and Diamond streets on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Note: The Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library, 451 Jersey Street, is closed for seismic repairs until late 2007. For information about the renovation, call 557-4353.

LIBRARY SELECTIONS

Adult Fiction

Twelve American tourists on a Himalayan journey find the road to Burma is paved with "less than honorable intentions, questionable food, and tribal curses," in Amy Tan's *Saving Fish From Drowning*.

Resourceful Henry Smart leaves behind a life of crime in Dublin (and his wife in jail), travels to America, and helps Louis Armstrong's musical career, in *Oh, Play That Thing*, Roddy Doyle's follow-up to *A Star Called Henry*.

Adult Nonfiction

In the new essay collection *Stranger Than Fiction*, journalist/author Chuck Palahniuk (best known for his novel *Fight Club*) covers a variety of weird subjects, including Marilyn Manson, Juliette Lewis, submariners, and his own father's murder.

Edited by Jenny Offill and Elissa Schappell, *The Friend Who Got Away* is a collection of 20 women's "true-life tales of friendships that blew up, burned out, or faded away."

In *The Last Imaginary Place: A Human History of the Arctic World*, archaeologist Robert McGhee explores the climate and inhabitants of the far north.

Tama Janowitz, author of *Slaves of New York*, tells fond tales of that other great coastal city, in *Area Code 212: New York Days, New York Nights*.

—Karol Barske, Noe Valley Voice staff

Children's Fiction

Find out if Maisy the mouse and her four friends will be able to fit inside their tent, in *Maisy Goes Camping* by Lucy Cousins. Ages 2 to 5.

In a garden near Beijing, *The Pea Blossom* yields five peas, each with its own dream and destiny, in Amy Lowry Poole's retelling of a Hans Christian Andersen tale, with her delicate watercolor paintings. Ages 5 to 8.

David Biedrzycki wittily relates the adventure of *Ace Lacewing, Bug Detective*, who is on the trail of the missing Queenie Bee amidst the insect inhabitants of Motham City. Ages 7 to 9.

Children's Nonfiction

Read *Butterflies* by Martin Schwabacher before visiting the San Francisco Conservatory of Flowers' Butterfly Zone exhibit. Ages 8 to 10.

Dip into the collection of stories, memories, advice, poems, and drawings in *Guys Write for Guys Read*, edited by Jon Scieszka, for glimpses into 91 authors' and artists' experiences of boyhood. Ages 11 to 14.

Unleash your crafting creativity by recycling and transforming clothing into items such as mittens, hats, and purses, as seen in *Second-Time Cool: The Art of Chopping Up a Sweater*, by Anna-Stina Lindén Ivarsson, and others. Ages 12 and up.

—Pam Ow, Children's Librarian, Eureka Valley-Harvey Milk Memorial Branch Library

LIBRARY EVENTS

Stories & Lapsits

Bethany United Methodist Church, at the corner of Sanchez and Clipper streets, is now offering space for the Noe Valley Library's weekly programs for children. This month's *lapsits*, for newborns to 3-year-olds, will be held Tuesdays, July 11, 18, and 25, at 10:15 a.m. *Preschool story time*, for kids ages 3 to 5, takes place at 11 a.m., also on Tuesdays, July 11, 18, and 25.

Meanwhile, the Eureka Valley and other local libraries, along with the Main Branch, host a variety of lapsits, lectures, and special events, for both children and adults. Go to www.sfpl.org for complete listings.

Branch Hours

Eureka Valley-Harvey Milk Branch Library
1 José Sarria Ct. (3555 16th St.), 355-5616

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
12-6	10-9	12-9	10-6	1-6	10-6	

Glen Park Branch Library
653 Chenery St., 337-4740

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		10-6	12-8	1-7	1-6	1-6

Mission Branch Library
300 Bartlett St., 355-2800

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1-5	1-9	10-9	10-9	10-6	1-6	10-6

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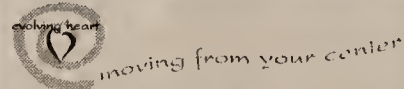


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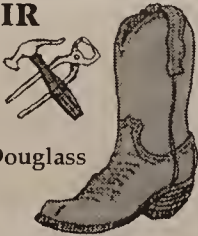
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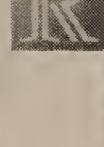
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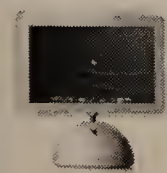
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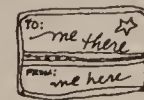
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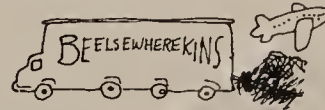
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and now for the RUMORS behind the news

Market Watch Dogs

By Mazook

GOOD NEWS hit the *Chronicle's* business page in a June story headlined, "Kroger Talking to Buyer for 12 Bay Area Stores." Listed among the 12 stores was our own Bell Market at 3950 24th Street. And the name of the buyer was none other than Harley DeLano.

As you Rumors-mongers know (see March-June *Voices*), DeLano is the "hometown" guy who owned Bell during the 1990s. Over the past six months, he has been trying to reacquire the store from Kroger/Ralphs in a package deal that would include up to a dozen other Bay Area Cala/Bells.

The clerks at our market are pretty excited about the prospect of DeLano taking over, after eight years under the control of Cincinnati-based giant Kroger Co. (And we do mean giant—Kroger's profits for the first quarter of 2006 came to over \$350 million.)

Still, they were a bit surprised by the revelation in the June 23 *Chronicle*, because the previous news had been that a DeLano deal had fallen through. But the same afternoon the *Chron* story broke, the employees' union, Local 648, sent out a representative to Bell to let everyone know that, yes, what the story said was true—the DeLano group is back at the bargaining table, with the union representing the Cala/Bell crew.

Reached a few days later, Mr. DeLano confirmed to the *Voice* that his company—DeLano Retail Partners—and the union were back to negotiating.

"You know we have been working on this transaction since last December," he said. "I hope that by late summer we will have resolved all the details, but it is kind of a com-

plex transaction. Let me also say that all the folks at Kroger and Ralphs in Southern California have been wonderful to work with. Everyone is trying to make this happen."

DeLano says he intends to expand Noe Valley's organic fruits and vegetables, and that he believes in "all-natural" meats, poultry, and fish. Right now he is raising cattle on a ranch in the Sierra foothills, where he moved after he sold the Cala/Bell chain to Kroger back in 1999. He has been in the grocery business for more than 50 years.

"I will be working with my son Dennis—who has worked in the supermarket industry the past 32 years, 15 for Ralphs—and my daughter, Desiree DeLano, who will be involved with public relations at the stores," DeLano said.

"We are very excited to become part of the communities we serve and we are hoping to attend meetings with the neighborhood groups to talk about the things the neighbors want, and then supply it to them," he added.

Once a deal is ironed out, DeLano's next step will be going around to the landlords of the various Bells and Calas to negotiate or renegotiate the leases.

"I was really sorry to see that the landlord at the Haight Street store sold the property for what I understand would be housing," he said. "It leaves that neighborhood without a super-market, but the Eureka Valley Cala is close by the Haight, which is not that long a drive."

DeLano also sent greetings to our Board of Supervisors representative Bevan Dufty, "who has been very encouraging through this process, and I look forward to having him attend the community meetings in Noe Valley and the Castro this fall."



YES, VIRGINIA, THERE IS A REMODEL: The other market to watch is Real Food Company, which will have been closed for three years come Labor Day. However, workmen were detected going into the premises last month, which sparked rumors that the long-promised "remodel" would soon commence.

The *Voice* contacted Stephen Hirschfeld, the local attorney representing Nutraceutical, the Utah-based corporation that owns the

They're Selling Like Cupcakes

A boom is going on in Downtown Noe Valley, but it's a tiny one. Cupcake-sized, in fact.

By Heidi Anderson

Saturday, June 24, 8 a.m. I wake up to an e-mail from my editor: The rumor is, cupcakes are springing up everywhere. Can I sniff out the facts? I grab my kids to make a quick tour of the local bakeries and coffeehouses. Oddly, no complaints from the kids.

First stop: Noe Valley Bakery on 24th near Castro. This place sells five big and beautiful cupcakes: Fudge, Most-est (like the brand name Hostess), Rocky Road, Zingered (also like the Hostess brand), and a plain yellow one without a cute name. According to bakery counterperson Alex, Most-est is the biggest seller. Each cupcake is \$1.95. My children purchase and inhale a Fudge and a Most-est. Thumbs up!

Up the street at Kookez Café, manager Deano Lovecchio is watching over the cupcake display at the front of the restaurant. The little fluffs are gorgeous, and a bargain: \$1.50 apiece; three for \$3.50; a dozen for \$12. Deano says on a recent evening he sold three cupcakes to a customer who was waiting to be seated for dinner. "More adults than kids come in and buy them," he says. You too can ruin your dinner—with three types of cake: chocolate, vanilla, or strawberry, iced with swirls of vanilla, chocolate, coconut, blue sprinkles....need I go on?

Deano says strawberry is the top seller. I

snag myself a strawberry. Light with crunchy sugar crystals. Refreshing.

Further up into the Noe Valley fogline is Café Ponte (formerly Diamond Corner), where owner Bruce Ponte proudly shows off his 'cake fare, created by new pastry chef (I kid you not) Lori Baker. The café's got carrot, coconut, cream-filled chocolate, and vegan!—made sans animal products. The vegans come in chocolate with raspberry, maple, or chocolate frosting.

Most popular at Café Ponte is the carrot cupcake, which Ponte says is the same recipe as his former non-selling Carrot Cake. Bruce adds, "Last week I sold 25 chocolate cupcakes for a birthday party." The vegan cupcake sells for \$3 and the others are \$2.

I hang a quick right on Diamond (kids still not tired!), and we find the tiniest of the cupcake trend, perched atop the deli case at PastaGina. These mini-cupcakes are vanilla cake with strawberry topping. Manager Steven says the store rotates the flavors. The cupcakes sell for 95 cents each, and according to Steve, customers usually try to buy just one, but....

Energized by our success (can't possibly be the sugar), my kids and I swing back down through Tully's, Martha's, and Starbucks. Alas, the chain coffeehouses have not been informed of the cupcake revolution. The chocolate muffins, about \$1.75 at each store, are a tempting substitute....

Hmmm, wonder if my editor needs a survey of chocolate.... "Stop! Kids, no!"

store. He said that since Nutraceutical now owns the 24th Street building, it is planning a much more extensive renovation and is currently working with architects on the plans. There are no timetables, though.

Knowing the S.F. permit process, my guess is 2008. Meanwhile, our health food needs will have to be filled by Bell Market, Bi-Rite, Mollie Stone's, Rainbow, and the Mom-and-Pops.



NOEZ IN THE NEWS: Bay Guardian food critic Paul Reidinger gave a favorable review

to one of our newest eateries, Kookez Café at 24th and Castro (May 2 issue). And while gushing over the Bayou Butter-BQ Dippin' Shrimp, he coined a new phrase for Noe Valley, calling it "the Beverly Hills of the Googleocracy."

Finally, we have something to put on our *Welcome to Noe Valley* signs.

If you Google the Canadian newspaper the *Edmonton Sun*, you can read about their reporter Yuri Wuensch's Memorial Day week-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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RUMORS

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

end in San Francisco, where he spent a lot of time having cocktails in Downtown Noe Valley. Writes Wuensch: "Being a devotee of filmmaker David Lynch, I wanted to check out a bar called 'The Peaks,' also in Noe Valley. It was even more of a hole than the punk bar we went to a few nights before. The bartender...was a...cutie, who regal[ed] us with tales of her strange regulars."

And then Noe Valley Bakery owner Michael Gassen was in the *Chronicle* describing to writer Tara Duggan how his bakers make their scones delicate and flaky. "We want scone dough to be shaggy," he told Duggan, noting that his secret was to add chunks of butter to the dough.

Gassen added that the neighborhood's favorite scone was Blueberry-Pecan, and that he sells between 100 and 200 a day. A quick check with bakery clerk Reed Morgan revealed that Blueberry-Pecan is now being challenged by the Currant-Orange for top scone.

☎ ☎ ☎

THE NAG AND THE FLAG: Another Noe Valleyan in the news is a horse, our most famous sprinter, Lost in the Fog. He won the Aristides Breeders' Cup at Churchill Downs last month. On July 15, according to owner and local character Harry Aleo, Fog will be running again in a high-stakes sprint at Calder Raceway.

This Fourth of July, Aleo is making the same offer he made last year (on a sign in his window at Twin Peaks Properties on 24th Street): "Free flags to celebrate the 4th of July. A free flag (American) will be given to any Looney Valley merchant, provided the flag is displayed in your store window." The sign continues, "Let's try and break the record last year when four (4) flags were given away."

Aleo likes to keep politics in the forefront. On the other window, he prefaces a CNN quote with the following to get our attention:

"Looney Valley anti-military Bush Bashers read this." Then he cites a Dec. 16, 1998, story about President Clinton announcing military strikes against Iraq.

Harry, Clinton was using the Air Force. Bush is using the Army.

☎ ☎ ☎

SUB-PRIZE: It looks like the corner of 24th and Castro made famous by Bud's Ice Cream in the 1960s (and more recently by Isabella's Dessert Café) will soon be transformed into a submarine sandwich shop serving Mitchell's Ice Cream for dessert.

New owner Rami Balat is opening Subs Inc., which he claims will serve "the best subs in town, with all the right breads, fixings, and meats. We are creating a new layout for the space which should make it very clean."

Balat has worked with his dad Karim at Noe Valley Deli for the past 15 years. "Yeah," he smiles, "I started working at my dad's deli when I was 10 years old, and so this will be a change for me." He says he is planning a grand opening in the middle of July, but hopes for a "soft opening" sooner. "We will just open the doors as soon as we can," he promises.

By the way, Balat is looking for a picture of Bud's on that corner, to put up on the wall of the new café.

☎ ☎ ☎

PARDON MY PIXEL: Noe Valley Computers owner Howard Petrick was surprised last month when clients, neighbors, and friends told him they read in this column that he had closed his business at Church and Clipper.

What I neglected to add was that he then moved his computer services store to a new location: 284 29th Street near Church, right behind Laurel Realty.

"Over 200 people contacted me since the paper came out in June. I was happy to get such a good response," says Petrick, "and real happy we found a new space in the neighborhood for a very reasonable rent, although it is about 60 percent of the space we had before."

Petrick started his computer repair business in 1987, near the corner of Sanchez and 24th, in a small space behind St. Clair's Liquor store. Business prospered during the tech

boom, and Noe Valley Computers moved to Clipper Street in 1991. He says he would have preferred to stay at the Clipper Street location, but his lease expired after the building was sold—reportedly for \$1.7 million—and the rent doubled.

Another computer shop, Castro Computer Services, recently had a similar experience. With a restaurant taking over its storefront at 1320 Castro, Castro Computer will be moving in August to the corner of 25th and Castro, where Open Door Yoga used to be.

Since it opened almost six years ago, the shop has migrated from one storefront on Castro to another—from 1236 (above 24th) to 1320 (below 24th) and now to 1500 Castro, across from James Lick's rear play yard.

Castro Computer does in-house and home computer repairs and upgrades, and builds custom PCs. "We're also known as the Internet cafe for Noe Valley," says Susan Walia, who's co-owner of CCS with her brother Raj Walia. "We have computers that people can just jump on [rent] right here in our shop."

Though moving is a lot of stress, Susan says she is getting excited about the new location. "It's a much bigger space. Parking is going to be a lot easier for us and our customers."

The extra room will enable her to offer more classes. "We already hold free classes in spyware—spyware is a bear. But we want to increase our training programs so that we can have more free classes."

☎ ☎ ☎

SPEAKING VOLUMES: Another Noe Valleyan making a move is Neal Sofman, who is closing down A Clean Well Lighted Place for Books, his beloved institution on Van Ness Avenue in Opera Plaza. Sofman, who moved to Noe Valley in 1987, opened the first Well Lighted back in 1975 in Cupertino, then a second shop in Larkspur Landing in Marin. His Opera Plaza store was launched in 1982.

"We closed the Cupertino store in 1997, the Larkspur store in '98, and now Opera Plaza, as soon as we can liquidate the inventory," says Sofman. "Many will ask why this is happening. The reasons are many and complex. The simple answer is that the book-buying market has moved on, either geographically or cul-

turally."

However, all is not lost. Sofman has opened a new, much smaller bookstore, Bookshop West Portal, with his wife Anna Bullard. "One of the mothers in our child's preschool [Eureka Learning Center] told me there was no bookstore in the West Portal shopping district and that the neighborhood really needed one—so I saw it as an opportunity, and found a great spot right across from the Empire Theater."

Sofman and Bullard are inviting the neighborhood to the West Portal store on Saturday, July 8, at 7 p.m., when National Book Award winner Julia Glass will be signing her latest, *The Whole World Over*.

☎ ☎ ☎

NO NOE VOTES: The neighborhood results of the June 6 statewide primary election have been tabulated by the San Francisco Department of Elections. Forty-one percent of Noe Valley's 9,739 registered Democrats went to the polls, and they gave Phil Angelides 2,457 votes and Steve Westly 1,609. A mere 391 of Noe Valley's 1,069 registered Republicans turned out to vote (36.5 percent), and almost all of them (319) voted for Schwarzenegger.

You might be interested to know that only 35 percent of the 596 Noe Valley Greens turned out to nominate Peter Camejo for governor (again), 20 of the 70 Libertarians, 16 of the 56 Peace and Freedom Party members, and only 43 of the 201 Noe Valleyans registered in the American Independent Party.

However, the Natural Law Party was able to get an impressive 42 percent of its local members to the polls, which was three voters.

☎ ☎ ☎

KUDOS GO OUT to the crew who work for the Noe Valley Community Benefit District. I am sure you all have noticed how much spiffier 24th Street is, now that we get a daily cleaning. CBD chair Debra Niemann wants everyone to know that you can call 559-8492 to "report major spills, like coke, gum, garbage, loose papers, vomit, or dog-doo messes, on 24th Street between Church and Douglass streets." The CBD gang will be on it in a jiffy.

That's 30, folks. Have a sane and safe holiday, and we'll see you in September. ■

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Castro Area Planning + Action

Contact: Linton Stables, 541-0344, ext. 230
E-mail: capa@home4us.org
Meetings: Second Thursday of the month,
Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100
Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

Diamond Heights Community Association

Contact: Betsy Eddy, 239-5776
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31529,
San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: First Thursday of the month, 7:30
p.m. Call for location.

Dolores Heights Improvement Club

Contact: Amy Powell, 647-4228
Mailing Address: 3732 21st St.,
San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Board meetings bimonthly; mem-
bership semi-annually. Call for details.

Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)

Contact: Keith Eickman, 282-8988; Evelyn
Martin, 826-6734; Deanna Mooney, 821-4045
Mailing Address: 560 Duncan St.,
San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Call for details.

East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club

Contact: Paul Kantus, 647-3753
Mailing Address: 492 Douglass St.,
San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Irregular, call to confirm.

Eureka Valley Promotion Association

Contact: Lion Barnett, 255-3624
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14137,
San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Third Thursday of the month
(except December), Eureka Valley Recrea-
tion Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

Fair Oaks Neighbors

Contact: Joyce Kurtz, 401-6362
Mailing Address: 261 Fair Oaks St., San
Francisco, CA 94110
Meetings: Call for information. The annual
Fair Oaks Street Fair is always held the day
before Mother's Day.

MORE GROUPS TO JOIN**Friends of Glen Canyon Park**

Contact: Richard Craib, 648-0862
Mailing Address: 140 Turquoise Way, San
Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Call for details.

Friends of Noe Courts Playground

Contact: Laura Norman
E-mail: lauranor@yahoo.com
Mailing Address: c/o Friends of Noe Valley,
P.O. Box 460953, San Francisco, CA 94146
Meetings: E-mail for dates and times.

Friends of Noe Valley

Contact: Richard May, 206-0231
E-mail: rambooks@pacbell.net
Web site: www.friendsofnoevalley.com
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 460953, San
Francisco, CA 94146
Meetings: First or second Thursday of the
month (call or e-mail to confirm), at
St. Philip's Parish Hall, 725 Diamond St.

Friends of On Lok's 30th Street Senior Center

Contact: Marianne Hampton, 601-7845
Mailing Address: 225 30th St., San
Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Occasional. Call for details.

Friends of Upper Noe Recreation Center

Contact: Christina Goebel, 826-7772
E-mail: christina_goebel@yahoo.com
Meetings: Call or e-mail for dates and times.

Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association

Contact: John Barbey, 695-0990
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 192114, San
Francisco, CA 94119
Meetings: Quarterly. Call for details.

Noe Strolls "Playgroup on Wheels"

Contact: noestrolls@aol.com
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Noe Valley Democratic Club

Contact: Andy Fleischman, 641-5838
Meetings: Third Wednesday of the month;
Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St.,
7:30 p.m.

Noe Valley Farmers' Market

Saturdays, 8 a.m. to noon, on 24th between
Sanchez and Vicksburg Street
Contact: Paula Benton, 248-1332
Mailing Address: 4104 24th St., #401, San
Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Second Thursday of the month,
Noe Valley Ministry (co-sponsor), 1021
Sanchez St., 6 p.m.

Noe Valley Library Campaign

Contacts: Kim Drew, 643-4695,
kkdrew@yahoo.com; Marian Chatfield-
Taylor, 626-7512, ext. 103
Mailing Address: Friends of the
San Francisco Public Library, 391 Grove St.,
San Francisco, CA 94102
Meetings: Call for information.

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association

Contact: Carol Yenne, 648-3954
Mailing Address: c/o Small Frys, 4066 24th
St., San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Last Wednesday of the month,
Bank of America, 24th and Castro, 9 a.m.

Noe Valley Parent Network

An e-mail resource network for parents
Contact: Mina Kenvin
E-mail: minaken@gmail.com

Noe Valley Preparedness Committee

Contact: Mindy Kershner, 377-3890
E-mail: mindytower@aol.com
Meetings: Call for details.

Outer Noe Valley Merchants

Contact: Jim Appenrodt, 641-1500
Mailing Address: 294 29th St., San
Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Call for details.

San Jose/Guerrero Coalition to Save Our Streets

Contacts: Don Oshiro, 285-8188
E-mail: contact@sanjoseguerrero.com
Web site: www.sanjoseguerrero.com
Meetings: See web site.

See Jane Run Running/Walking Club

Contact: Lori Shannon, 401-8338
Mailing Address: 3870 24th Street, San
Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Sundays, 10 a.m. (Runners meet
at See Jane Run to pick up the 5K run/walk
route. Info? www.SeeJaneRunSports.com.)

Southwest Mission Neighborhood Association (SWMNA)

Boundaries: 24th Street to Cesar Chavez and
Fair Oaks to Mission
Contact: Lori Oshiro, Secretary
E-mail: lori@tail-wagging.com
Web site: www.tail-wagging.com
Meetings: E-mail for information.

Upper Noe Neighbors

Contact: Vicki Rosen, 285-0473
Mailing Address: 169 Valley St., San
Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Last Thursday of the month (call
to confirm), Upper Noe Recreation Center,
Day and Sanchez streets, 7:30 p.m.



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